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Land Donation to RMBL in memory of conservationist George B. Beardsley



COURTESY PHOTO

[BY IAN BILLYCK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ROCKY MOUNTAIN BIOLOGICAL LABORATORY]

A long-time Colorado family, the Beardsleys, have donated mining claims on the top of Sheep Mountain to the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory (RMBL) in memory of George B. Beardsley.

The 30-acre parcel is at the top of Sheep Mountain, just north of the town of Crystal and not far from RMBL's North Pole Basin property and the Mexican Cut, a preserve RMBL manages for The Nature Conservancy.

The family has long ties to the region, including Gothic. The Sheep Mountain property was originally staked as four mining claims in the early 1880s by George's great grandfather, Orlando S. Beardsley. Orlando owned a blacksmith shop about 100 feet away from what is now RMBL's administrative office in Gothic.

George, who passed away in 2011, is well known and regarded by the state's conservation community. As an early and effective advocate for the preservation of Colorado's open lands, his influence is present in most of the state's major land protection projects. Among his numerous important efforts, George was a member of the coalition who worked to pass the Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) ballot initiative and was appointed by Governor Romer to serve on the initial GOCO board of trustees.

RMBL will preserve the Sheep Mountain

property and use it as a research site. According to RMBL science director Dr. Jennifer Reithel, "We are excited to receive a high elevation parcel to support our research activities in the Crystal watershed. We maintain a portfolio of access, including RMBL property, permits to work on public lands and permissions from private land owners, that provides RMBL scientists unparalleled access to a range of ecosystems and organisms across an elevational gradient."



COURTESY PHOTO



photo by Lydia Stern

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Backcountry Film Festival coming to Gunnison February 6

Calling all "go big or go home" winter enthusiasts. Get ready to get goose bumps while you "Ooh" and "Ahh" at the impact and importance of our winter wildlands through this collection of short films. The 15th annual Winter Wildlands Alliance Backcountry Film Festival will show in Gunnison on Thursday, February 6 at Western Colorado University's Center Theatre. All proceeds will benefit High Country Conservation Advocates.

High Country Conservation Advocates protects the health and natural beauty of the land, rivers and wildlife in and around Gunnison County now and for future generations.

Produced each year as a celebratory, backcountry community event by the Winter Wildlands Alliance, the 15th Annual Backcountry Film Festival film line-up is full of snowy, cinematic adventure sure to inspire both the local backcountry and general communities. Winter Wildlands Alliance is a national non-profit organization dedicated to promoting and preserving winter wildlands and a quality



COURTESY PHOTO

human-powered snow sports experience on public lands.

By partnering with groups like High Country Conservation Advocates at a local level, the Winter Wildlands Alliance raises funds for these groups and communities through the annual Backcountry Film Festival national tour. All funds raised directly benefit local

projects and programs that perpetuate access and stewardship of public lands.

Adventure, environment and climate, youth outdoors, ski culture—you'll find it all in this award-winning lineup. Doors open at 6 p.m. and the screening begins at 6:30 p.m. Admission is free with WCU ID or \$10 for others.