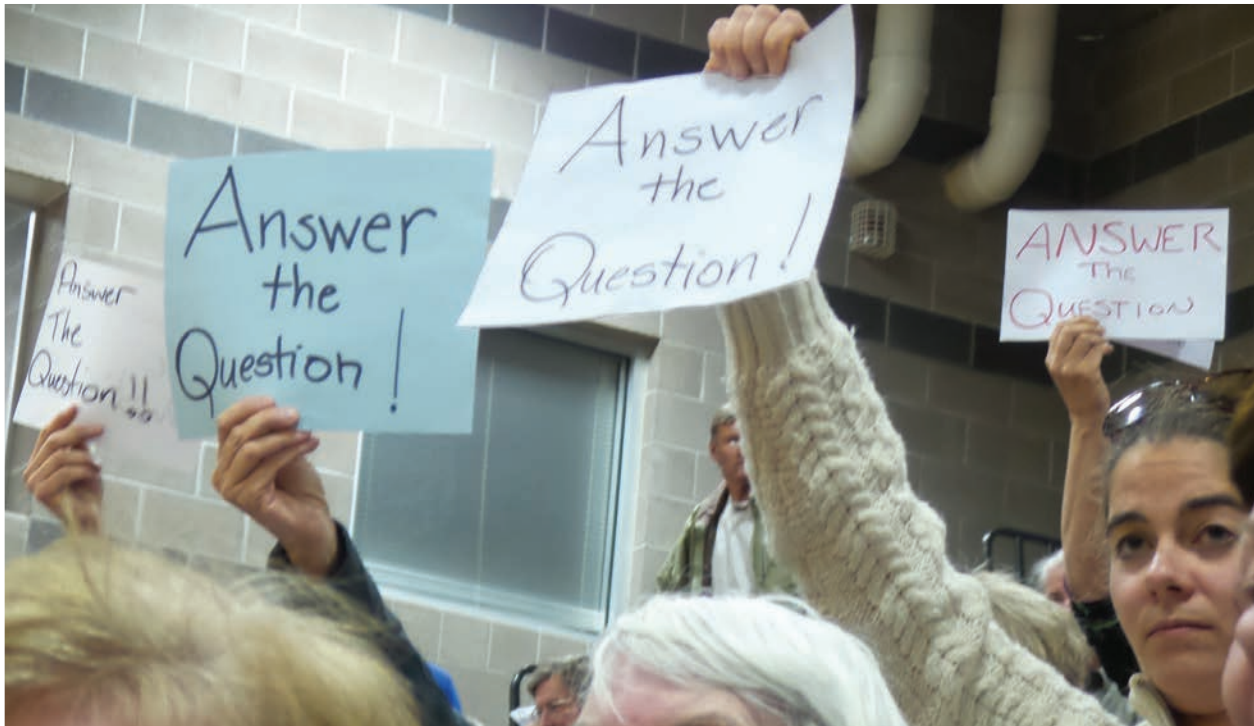


CLARION

CONNECTING YOU TO OUR ALLIANCE FOR COMMUNITY ACTION



At left: People packed the Montrose High School cafeteria for US Rep. Scott Tipton's town hall in early April, armed with a variety of signs to clearly convey their sentiments. Above: WCC organizer Jeriel Brammeier and WORC political director Sara Kendall participated in the Climate March in Washington DC in late April.



A growing movement asks, "what's next?"

By Jeriel Brammeier, WCC Organizer

Since the dawn of the pink hats at the Women's March in January, a movement has emerged with passion and direction. Some have organized before, but many are brand new to the world of activism. They're sticking with it and are now asking, "what's next?"

The marches amassed people and welcomed them into the democratic process, but it's time to set aside the picket signs and build real political power; to expand our energy **beyond protests and into activism.**

Imagine democracy as an iceberg. At the tip, above the water, is the obvious – national elections. However, activists and organizers know the mass and power of the iceberg lies below the surface. National elections are the crucial end-result of leadership development, political awareness and engagement, and community-driven policy.

Grassroots Democracy is that significant dimension of the iceberg, and WCC is elevating its importance by further developing it as a program area and dedicating more staff time and resources to it.

Grassroots Democracy means working with individuals and organizations, old and new; strengthening relationships with groups and elected officials; finding common cause; and building collective power in our actions. We must

hold our elected officials accountable by making calls, visiting their offices, demanding town halls, and insisting they give answers. An equally important component of Grassroots Democracy is **training** anyone with the desire and drive to organize effectively in their community.

With its depth of organizing experience, WCC is partnering with budding activists and groups like our local Indivisible chapters, D3 Indivisible, and Western Colorado Days of Action. These groups are intent on bringing power to the Western Slope. For example, **D3 Indivisible** is leading the charge on issues in Colorado's 3rd Congressional District, which is served in the US Congress by Rep. Scott Tipton (R).

When D3 Indivisible suggested holding the **first Western Colorado summit for leaders in this movement**, WCC said, "We're in!" We are now working with D3 Indivisible to make this summit even more impactful by sharing organizing tools that attendees can take back to their communities (see sidebar).

The mission statement of Western Colorado Congress ends with the emphasis that we work together to create a "truly democratic society," and Grassroots Democracy is aimed at doing just that. Our participation in the D3 Summit is only the beginning. Looking ahead, we're focused on building relationships with our elected officials through continuous in-district meetings. We'll

mobilize groups by engaging them in active participation at town hall meetings. And we'll work to develop leaders and support communities with ongoing trainings led by our members.

So, now, we need to hear from you. What are your local needs? Give me a call at (970) 256-7650!



A link to complete information on the D3 Summit including registration is found on WCC's homepage at wccongress.org or d3indivisible.co. Registration is \$25 per person, not including lunch. Deadline for registration is Sunday, July 16. The day will include three rounds of workshops, a candidates' forum and other optional activities.

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Whitewater proposal back again

by Emily Hornback, WCC Organizer

In late June, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) released its long-awaited revised Environmental Assessment on a proposal to drill 108 oil wells in the Grand Junction watershed outside of Whitewater. WCC has beaten back various forms of this proposal for years, and last year won a reprieve from the impending project when the State BLM Director agreed with protests filed by WCC, Citizens for a Healthy Community and the Western Environmental Law Center.

The proposal was then sent back to the drawing board for further analysis and the revised proposal is now available for public comment until July 28.

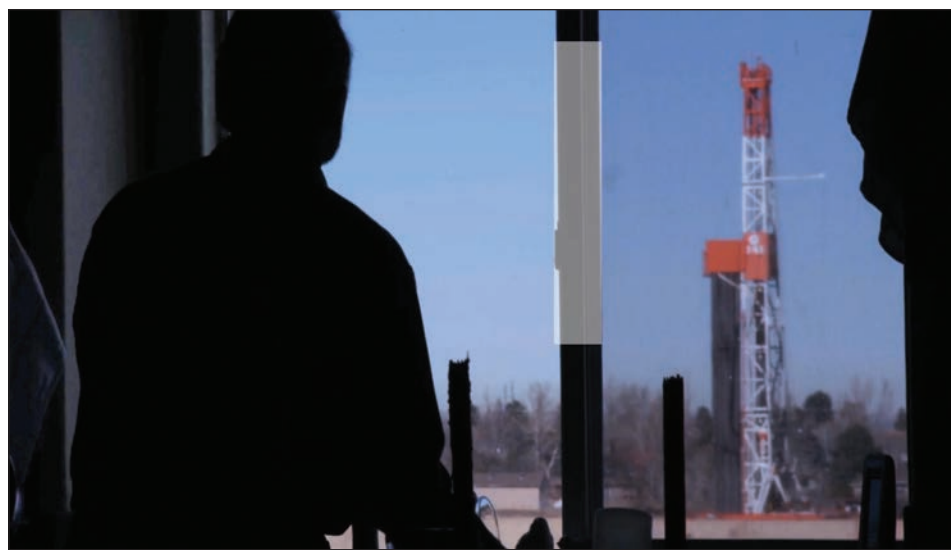
As of this writing, WCC staff and leaders are still reviewing the changes in the document to see if our concerns have been adequately

addressed. Chief among those concerns are air and water quality impacts - not only to the municipal watershed, but also to springs in the area that local ranchers depend on for their livelihoods.

Whitewater rancher and WCC member Don Lumbardy depends on water from the spring near his ranch, for both drinking water and for his livestock. Last year Don greeted the news of a revised analysis with hope, saying, "It's time to have an adult conversation about this project and cover our concerns the in-depth analysis they deserve."

Our next steps are dependent on what we find in the review. However, one thing is for sure, we will hold the project to the highest standards possible and take the action necessary to protect this critical watershed.

Check wccongress.org for more details and information.



A scene from "Battlement Mesa," a documentary by PowerSurge Productions.

Film captures lessons of David vs. Goliath struggle

In May, our Garfield County affiliate, Grand Valley Citizens Alliance, hosted the Colorado premiere of a short documentary film, "Battlement Mesa." Produced by PowerSurge Productions, the film is the result of three years of effort.

Filmmakers Gayle Embry and Sue Drinker documented the dozens of meetings, hearings, demonstrations, rallies and other activities that members of

Battlement Concerned Citizens, a committee of GVCA, have attended and organized over the years, stitching it all together into a cohesive and inspirational story.

Our thanks to Gayle and Sue for capturing this David vs. Goliath fight. The film helps share the lessons of our work with other communities across the country.

Watch it for free at wccongress.org/wcc/battlement-mesa.

Got grit?

by Steve Allerton, WCC President

When I think about "grit," I immediately think about those annoying tiny bits of sand, dust, and fodder that slam into my eyes during the hot-dry-windy days we experience here on the Western Slope. I'm amazed at the discomfort and the amount of time it sometimes takes to remove the particles.

I was recently introduced to another way of thinking about "grit" when my daughter, who teaches at an alternative high school in Denver, shared with me **Angela Duckworth's book *Grit***, which members of the staff at her school were all reading. In brief, the book describes "passion and perseverance" as primary determiners of success.

As I reflect on the work of Western Colorado Congress and the articles contained in this issue, it's clear that "grit" is what I admire most about the staff and its members. Perseverance is clearly seen in the GMUG Forest Plan, the informational gatherings of the PLACE group, and the indomitable spirit of folks

in Battlement Mesa. I'm seeing Grassroots Democracy growing and beginning to thrive, while continuing efforts are being made to impact how energy is produced and used on the Western Slope, all reasons why committing to the long view is so important.

With the long view in mind, after over 30 years, it's time to pause a moment, take an in-depth look at our communities, and assess whether or not WCC is meeting the needs and addressing the challenges that exist in today's world. In the coming months I look forward to reading and discussing the data and analysis from the organizing assessment which WCC is currently engaged in.

As we move through the challenges of today and those to come, we may be perceived as annoying bits of sand and dust that get in the eyes of policy makers. However, what I see is people possessed with passion, perseverance, and the "grit" to make the long-term investment and create the enduring grassroots political power that will ultimately prevail.

Next proposal for Battlement drilling starts out in violation

by Emily Hornback, WCC Organizer

Summer will not exactly be vacation time for members of Battlement Concerned Citizens. In mid-June, Ursa Resources submitted six applications for special use permits to continue its development of oil and gas in Battlement Mesa.

The applications are for **two new large-scale well pads**, a water storage facility, two pipelines and a wastewater injection well. One of the pads will be within 500 feet of homes, a clear violation of state setback rules.

Over the summer, we will continue to help BCC work for better siting of the pads, and more protections to make the project as safe and convenient as possible for residents.

BCC, a committee of our Garfield County affiliate, Grand Valley Citizens Alliance, is also helping residents hold Ursa accountable to promises the company made to the community in permitting decisions late last year.

In May, BCC and WCC hosted a **workshop on how to file complaints** with state regulatory agencies. If an operator is violating the terms of its permits, it will only be fined if the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission knows about it. And since most COGCC inspectors don't live in Western Colorado, neighbors of drilling activity are the first line of documentation and enforcement.

To learn more about filing complaints with the COGCC, contact me at emily@wccongress.org.

Western Colorado Congress

is a grassroots, democratic organization dedicated to challenging injustice by organizing people to increase their power over decisions that affect their lives.

WCC's community groups and members work together to create healthy, sustainable communities, social and economic justice, environmental stewardship and a truly democratic society.

Grand Junction Office

134 N. 6th St., (970) 256-7650
Dave Reed, Executive Director
Emily Hornback, Organizer
Roxanne Dennis, Organizer
Jeriel Brammeier, Organizer
Marie Mitchell, Development
Stephani Soto, Office & Membership
Brenda Bafus-Williams, Communications
Wyatt Hurt, Summer Intern
Lehua La'a, Summer Intern

www.wccongress.org

WCC Board of Directors

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Steve Allerton President, Grand Junction
Reed Kelley, Vice President, Meeker
Dudley Case, Treasurer, Ridgway
Shari VanderVelde, Secretary, Grand Jct

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Ricardo Perez, Montrose
Rodger Steen, Steamboat Springs
Monica Wiitanen, Paonia

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Peggy Rawlins, Grand Junction

Community group directors

GRAND VALLEY CITIZENS ALLIANCE
Betsy Leonard, Battlement Mesa
RIDGWAY-OURAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL
Al Lowande, Ridgway
UNCOMPAGRE VALLEY ASSOCIATION
Marv Ballantyne, Montrose
WCC OF MESA COUNTY
Andriya Krieves, Grand Junction

Montrose County opens up to energy efficiency

by Shane Duckworth, Montrose

Montrose WCC members cheered the county commissioners' unanimous May 31 vote to participate in a statewide program that finances energy and water efficiency projects. Leaders of the Uncompahgre Valley Association (UVA), WCC's local affiliate, had spent the preceding couple of months introducing and advocating the program to the county commissioners and staff.

Colorado's **Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE)** is a creative financing program made available by state statute for energy and water efficiency projects on commercial property. It leverages the use of private lending by using an established collection process: the county property tax assessment.

WCC members in Ouray and Mesa counties are also urging their commissioners to adopt C-PACE as part of our clean energy campaign.

Projects that show a positive cash flow from energy or water efficiency improvements can finance up to 100% of project costs through C-PACE by placing a voluntary assessment on the property owner's tax bill. Because the improvements are tied to the property, the obligation automatically transfers to the new owner upon property sale, with the benefit that the new owner enjoy improved and upgraded buildings.

UVA first approached the county treasurer, then teamed up with Montrose Economic Development Council (MEDC) Director Sandy Head to make an initial presentation to Commissioner Keith Caddy, the county treasurer, county manager, and several local business leaders.

The group made a follow-up presentation to the county commissioners, manager, and interim attorney at a commissioners' work session.

The commissioners made the unanimous opt-in decision a little more than a month later, citing the County's Strategic Plan Priority #4, "Effective and Responsive Government," and the fact that this stimulates local business and costs the county nothing to implement.

Please join us in thanking Commissioners Caddy, Roger Rash, and Glen Davis (as well as Treasurer Murphy, Manager Norris, and Acting Attorney Clawson) for reviewing and approving this beneficial program so quickly!

There is more work to do for Montrose County to take advantage of this great program. You can help by:

1. Reviewing the program at copace.com; and
2. Encouraging local businesses to consider using C-PACE loans to increase their bottom line and green the planet through energy and water efficiency measures.



The PLACE team celebrates the Grand Junction City Council's decision to sign on to a \$25,000 matching grant application for a feasibility study for a community & recreation center. PLACE has already secured financial pledges for another \$25,000 to fund the study.

PLACE wins support from Grand Junction council

by Mary Sornsin, PLACE team

After months of dedicated organizing, PLACE (People for Local Activities & Community Enrichment) spokespersons Andrey Krieves and Kimberly Langston presented a proposal on June 5 to the Grand Junction City Council. The presentation included a power point and video supporting a feasibility study for a Grand Junction Community & Recreation Center.

The city council agreed to sign on to a Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) \$25,000 matching grant application to fund the study.

PLACE has received financial pledges for the study from the

Colorado Health Foundation in the amount of \$20,000 and another \$5,000 from the Rocky Mountain Health Foundation.

The feasibility study will inform both the city and the public on the next steps to bring a community & recreation center to fruition.

With the city council approval members of the PLACE team took a brief pause to celebrate.

These days the PLACE team -- a committee of Western Colorado Congress of Mesa County -- is continuing to gather signatures of support and encouraging people to follow the current progress on

See PLACE continued on p. 6

Nationwide organizing holds strong on BLM methane rule

by Emily Hornback, WCC Organizer

People living with the impacts of oil and gas development around the country had **reason to cheer** on May 10. In a nail-biter decision, the US Senate voted 51-49 to uphold a key rule that requires oil and gas companies to capture wasted methane gas from operations on public and tribal lands.

The oil and gas industry had launched its assault on the **Bureau of Land Management's Methane Rule** the moment it was finalized in November 2016.

"This rule has widespread support from people across the West and across the political spectrum," said Rodger Steen, chair of WCC's Oil and Gas Committee. "It saves taxpayers money on lost royalties from oil and gas resources on public lands that are literally being flared, leaked, and vented into the air. It is good to see that common sense protections supported by a majority of people across the country can still

win the day in Congress."

Despite obvious public support of the rule, industry groups spent an estimated \$100 million in lobbying efforts to kill it. However, this time around, grassroots power trumped the deep pockets of the American Petroleum Institute in an unprecedented win.

The vote went largely along party lines, but three Republican Senators halted the motion with swing votes. **Colorado Sen. Michael Bennet (D)** staunchly supported the rule, but **Sen. Cory Gardner (R)** ultimately failed to stand with 83% of his constituents who supported the rule and, instead, voted with Big Oil.

WCC and its sister organizations in the Western Organization of Resource Councils have been working toward this victory for decades. Most recently, WCC members have:

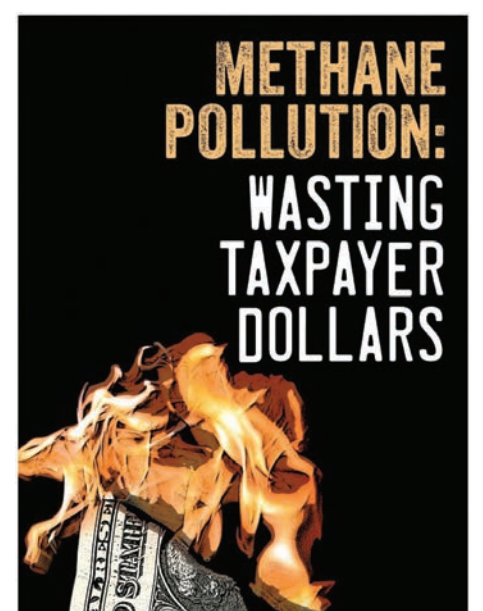
- Participated in a trip to eastern Utah to document cross-border methane pollution with an

infrared camera;

- Held a rally on Tax Day to highlight the millions of dollars American taxpayers are losing in royalties;
- Met with the staff of Sens. Gardner and Bennet in Grand Junction and Washington DC;
- Submitted dozens of letters to regional papers in support of the rule; and
- Documented people's stories on LivingWithOilAndGas.com.

It is the experiences of real people dealing with oil and gas development that won the support of key senators in this vote on the methane rule.

"Natural gas pollution can make it extremely difficult for children and older adults such as myself to breathe," said Kristin Winn in a guest blog on WCC's website. "Here in western Colorado, we see the results of air pollution from the west being blown into our cities and towns. Air pollution knows no boundaries."



However, industry continues to use its influence in the new administration, with the BLM and the Environmental Protection Agency announcing extensive suspensions of the methane pollution rules. So WCC, WORC and our allies will again be tracking these manipulations, organizing people to respond, and exploring legal action.



YOU ARE HERE:

CREATING A ROAD MAP WHEN THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE WON'T HOLD STILL

WCC'S 2017 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

In today's political landscape, it could be easy to let the daily tremors send us running for cover. Western Colorado Congress is here to remind you not only that **YOU ARE HERE**, but also that **WE ARE WORKING TO GET OVER THERE**.

With this year's annual conference, we hope to set out some signposts to guide us on our way, and to remind one and all of our power to influence the outcome of decision-making processes in our communities. Join us for a day that promises to inspire, build skills and highlight new ideas, all while having some fun!

As a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, WCC remains non-partisan in the world of politics. However, WCC can participate in voter education, lobby at the State Capitol to the extent allowed by law, and take active positions on ballot initiatives.

SHASTI CONRAD



Our keynote speaker, **Shasti Conrad**, is a dynamic changemaker who has demonstrated political, policy and socio-cultural expertise for over 10 years. Diversity and inclusion are values ingrained within her work, starting at the White House in 2009, and continuing in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

Shasti is currently the US Campaign Manager and Regional Planning Adviser for the 100 Campaign, which aims to be the largest youth mobilization in history to end child labor trafficking. Shasti's work has included several national political campaigns, including the Sanders and Clinton presidential campaigns, as well as work with Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai.

PAY IT FORWARD

If \$35 is more than you can swing for registration (which includes lunch), call Stephani at our office (970-256-7650) to ask about our **Pay It Forward scholarships!**

And if WCC has enriched your life, **please consider donating a scholarship or two**. It's fast becoming a tradition for our our generous members to "pay it forward" so that some fresh new faces can attend the conference free of charge.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 26

Two Rivers Convention Center
159 Main Street
Grand Junction, Colorado

BUSINESS MEETING

10:00 am

- Reports, election and resolutions (See details on page 5.)

WORKSHOP BLOCK 1

2:00 pm

- **You Are Here:** Join us in finding an understanding of WCC within the bigger picture of movement organizing. Participants will engage in an interactive exercise to give us clarity on where and how our work fits into the bigger picture.
- **Capitol Confidential:** A conversation with Sol Malick, WCC's Denver-based lobbyist, about the results of the 2017 legislative session and forecasts for 2018.
- **Immigration - Our Role in the Journey:** Karen Sherman Perez of the Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition will facilitate a group discussion and exercise to help identify our possible next steps in this long distance trek towards justice.

HAPPY HOUR

6:00 pm

- Join us at Charlie Dwellington's to continue the conversations and enjoy local live music. Cash bar. (across the street from Two Rivers Convention Center)

REGISTRATION

9:00 am

- 9:15 - Building up Grassroots Democracy, Breakfast & Convo (RSVP to Jeriel@wccongress.org if you plan on participating.)

LUNCH

12:15 pm

- Welcome from Dave Reed, WCC Executive Director
- Rising Star and Worley Awards for Outstanding Volunteers (See details for nominations on page 5.)
- **KEYNOTE ADDRESS: The National Landscape: What This Political Moment Means for the Grassroots, with Shasti Conrad**

WORKSHOP BLOCK 2

4:00 pm

- **Colorado's Political Landscape:** Explore what has changed in Colorado since the election, what the statewide trends are, and how we as an organization can respond.
- **Putting our Work on the Map:** Learn how to maximize our social media presence, grow our cadre of followers, increase our impact, and share our stories to win our campaigns.
- **Charting Our Own Course:** Like many nonprofits, WCC is too reliant on grants – which means foundations, rather than members, often influence our priorities. In this session we'll discuss how to reclaim our agenda by putting the grassroots into our funding.

PLEASE REGISTER BY AUGUST 15

LUNCH

Lunch will be served buffet style and prepared gluten-free.

This registration includes _____ (#) vegetarians.

DAYCARE

Let us know if you need access to free daycare in order to attend. Please indicate the age of your children.

BREAKOUT SESSION PREFERENCES

Which sessions do you plan to attend?

2:00 pm: Block 1

____ You Are Here

____ Capitol Confidential

____ Immigration - Our Role in the Journey

4:00 pm: Block 2

____ Colorado's Political Landscape

____ Putting Our Work On the Map

____ Charting Our Own Course

Register at our website (wccongress.org) or mail this form to:

WCC, PO Box 1931,
Grand Jct CO 81502

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Email _____

Please bill my Visa MC Discover AmEx

Card no.: _____

Exp. Date: ___/___/___ Phone _____

Quantity		Amount
_____	Adults at \$35 each	= _____
_____	Kids under 12	= FREE
_____	Pay It Forward scholarships at \$35 each	= _____
	TOTAL	= _____

Nominations open for WCC officers

An important piece of WCC's Annual Conference is always the Annual Business Meeting. Nominations are open until August 12 for this year's election of WCC Vice President and Secretary.

To nominate a WCC member (including yourself!) for one of these positions, contact WCC President Steve Allerton at (970) 201-0307.

The WCC Board's Nominations Committee is putting forward the following candidates.



Shari VanderVelde for Secretary

Having lived in western Colorado since 1976, I feel invested in the health and well-being of my community, and in the communities of the Western Slope.

As a retired public school teacher, I'm concerned about our youth: the need for strong public schools and well-qualified staff. For five years, I volunteered as a CASA (Court-Appointed Special Advocate)

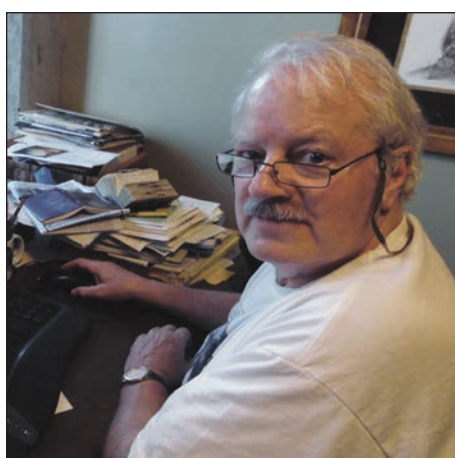
to support children in our county undergoing the most difficult and challenging of circumstances – undergoing abuse and neglect, being separated from their families, and subjected to the court system.

Following the political events of the last 18 months, I also feel compelled to learn more about my white privilege, and to reach out to people often relegated to the shadows.

These are the issues that compel me to become a more involved citizen – the importance of our public lands, the need for a healthy community, the wish for social and environmental justice, and a belief in a truly democratic society. These issues are also the ones in WCC's mission statement, leading me to serve as your secretary and work towards this shared vision.

Reed Kelley for Vice President

For part of my early years as an adult, I was a "lobbyist" at the state legislature for sportsmen, conservation and wildlife interests. At that time, I was lucky to be involved with the passage of our Colorado In-Stream Flow Law, as well as the drafter, lobbyist and



initial staff coordinator for the Colorado Natural Areas Program.

After a nearly ten-year hiatus, I have been back on the WCC board now for two years serving as Vice President. I have enjoyed putting some of my early experience as a lobbyist to work with WCC's Legislative Committee. I have been most impressed with our WCC staff effort and lobbyist involved at the state legislature. I hope we can continue to improve member involvement and success in legislative matters.

Should I be re-elected as Vice President, I hope you won't hesitate to contact me. The truth be told, I have hardly heard from any of you these past two years. I know WCC would be stronger if all of us on the board were used more in this capacity by the membership.

[Can't make it to the business meeting, but still want to vote?](#)

As a result of a resolution passed at last year's annual conference, WCC will be offering online and paper ballots this year. If we have your email address, you'll receive an invitation to vote online in August.

No email? Call Brenda at (970) 210-5242 to request a paper ballot.

Shine a light on a Rising Star

Honor an outstanding WCC volunteer by nominating him or her for one of two awards to be given at this year's Annual Conference! Nominations may be made by an individual, local affiliate group or committee.

Nominations for either award should be submitted to brenda@wcccongress.org by August 1. Be sure to include a persuasive statement of the nominee's involvement in WCC and/or one of its community groups.

Worley Award

The Chuck & Betsy Worley Award was established in 1999, and is named in honor of two of WCC's Founding Humans who were life-long activists for environmental and social justice. A list of previous honorees can be found on WCC's website at wcccongress.org/wcc/annual-conference.

Rising Star Award

This year we'll also be inaugurating the Rising Star Award which will specifically honor new volunteers. To be eligible, a nominee must have joined or become active in WCC in the past two years.

Resolutions: health care, economic development

The following resolutions will be voted on at this year's Annual Business Meeting on Saturday, August 26. (See schedule on pg 4.)

Resolutions that have been adopted by the membership or Board of Directors become a statement of WCC's public position on important issues, and guide future policy decision-making within the organization.

Quality Healthcare in Colorado

WHEREAS, the mission of the Western Colorado Congress includes the promotion of healthy, sustainable communities, and embraces social and economic justice; and

WHEREAS, we believe that every person should have access to quality and affordable healthcare when they need it; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that access to healthcare often depends on access to paid sick leave in the workplace; and

WHEREAS, essentially every industrialized nation in the world provides universal healthcare except ours; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Western Colorado Congress supports the vision of a universal health care system in Colorado that covers all Coloradoans with quality care, allows people a choice of medical providers and eliminates the added expense and bureaucracy of insurance companies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Western Colorado Congress supports policies that promote substantial paid family and medical leave from the workplace.

Economic Development

WHEREAS, the 1986 resolution referenced below continues to reflect the scope and work of Western Colorado Congress; and

WHEREAS, the coal industry continues to decline and the problems faced by workers and communities will continue to grow;

and

WHEREAS, the need exists to dedicate time and resources and strategic planning to engage with members and communities impacted by an economy in transition;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Western Colorado Congress reaffirms the 1986 Economic Development resolution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Western Colorado Congress shall assess the appropriateness of engaging in economic transition work in impacted communities, and shall consider that assessment in its strategic planning.

Economic Development

(existing 1986 resolution)

WHEREAS, Western Colorado is a beautiful region, primarily rural, agricultural and recreational in character; and

WHEREAS, the present economy here is in distress because of drastic decreases in energy exploitation, national and international recession,

and problems in the agricultural sector; and

WHEREAS, efforts to restore the economic health of this region should enhance our environment and present character, and minimize our vulnerability to national and international influences beyond our control;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Western Colorado Congress supports economic development which places greatest importance upon locally generated activities using local resources and local skills including rejuvenation of existing activities and creation of new ones compatible with our environment and present character; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, to the extent that attempts are made to attract businesses from outside our region, care should be given to select those which are not only compatible with, but also enhance the character of our area and existing economic activities.

PLACE wins support for community center

Continued from page 3

Facebook. PLACE will also be meeting with community groups, individuals, and leaders. PLACE's website, facebook.com/GJ Community Center, currently has 1,080 followers and over 2,000 signatures of support have been collected. This work will continue for the next several months while the feasibility study is being completed. The grassroots organization wants to listen to the citizens of Grand Junction to best shape a Community & Recreation Center plan.

As a recent addition to the PLACE team, I decided to join after visiting a Friday morning meeting and observing the professionalism and respect that the members held for each other. The diverse makeup of the participants contributed to a grassroots

feel. The commitment to help the community deliver a Community and Recreation Center is clear. Imagine our excitement when the city council voted to sign off on the DOLA grant application. We can now move forward and focus on a campaign.

Another member, Gay Hammer, said, "One of the things I have been impressed with is the willingness of WCC to work with the PLACE team to facilitate our goal of a Community & Recreation Center for Grand Junction." Hammer said she looked forward to "working with Roxanne and WCC staff as we move into the feasibility stage."

Want to get involved? Follow our posts, share them with friends or attend a meeting.

Our email address is gjcommunitycenter@wcccongress.org.



At this year's Earth Day event in Grand Junction, WCC organizer Roxanne Dennis and Brooke Safken-Batholomew considered future possibilities for Mesa County while looking at a painting of the valley by Onxy Cly-Peek. WCC encouraged event attendees to add their thoughts and visions to the artwork on post-it notes, many of which called for a Grand Junction community center.

THANK YOU!

Western Colorado Congress wishes to thank the following generous people and foundations who have made donations since our previous newsletter. We couldn't do it without you! New members are highlighted with an asterisk (*).

\$5000 and up

Agua Fund
EarthWise Foundation/Barbara Parish & Gary Roberts
Faraway Foundation
R.B. & Cass Galloway
Kid's Giving Fund
New-Land Foundation
Rockefeller Family Fund

\$1000-\$4999

Peggy Bass Berglund
Randy & Jen Parker
Western Energy Project

\$500-\$999

Carol & Russ Atha
Estate of Ellen Gyger
John Metcalf
Susan & Jim Nall
Steve Reimer
Jim Riddell
Mary & Clee Sealing
Rodger & Leslie Steen
Triad EAP, John Gibbon
Rein & Jan van West

\$200-\$499

Deb & Steve Allerton
George & Lisa Bartlett
Barbara Chamberlin
Church of the Nativity
Ellen & Craig Fetterolf
Richard & Jan Hyland
Fran Jacob
Paul Janzen
Cat Jordan
Koinonia Church
Lummis Family Fund
Jane & Bill Mitchell
Dave & Crystal Murphy
Patrick O'Meara
Lance & Peg Oswald
Dave Price
David Schroeder
Dr. & Mrs. Roger Shenkel
Kent Snowbarger & Shari VanderVelde

*Heidi Troxell
Nick & JoAnne Williams

\$100-\$199

Gerald Audesirk
Michael Behrendt
Linda Browning
Dudley & Sharon Case
John Cassidy
Mary Ellen Denomy
Lit duPont
Dan Elsner
Scott Fetchenhier
Ellie Goldstein & John Moore
Jane Hendricks
Henry & Jeanne Hooper
Tom Howe
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New talent on staff team!

In addition to adding a new position to the WCC staff in April in the form of a Development Coordinator, WCC is fortunate to have found two talented summer interns to help us with our communications work. Stop by the Grand Junction office (134 N. 6th Street) and welcome them all!



Development Coordinator: Marie Mitchell

Marie Mitchell brings 15 years combined experience in fundraising, event coordination, media production and development to the WCC staff team. She has worked for marketing and nonprofit organizations like Fairbanks Resource Agency, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Alaska, NBC in New Orleans and AlaskaONE Public Broadcasting.

Marie is originally from the Sunshine State of Florida, lived in the Last Frontier of Alaska, and recently relocated to her husband's home state of Colorado.

Intern: Wyatt Hurt

A recent Mesa County high school graduate who is headed to Boston for college, **Wyatt Hurt** has already assembled an impressive body of work. When he was 14,



he founded a media firm, Magic Media. He has also served as the communications director for several campaigns and a political party.

Wyatt realizes that communications is an enormously powerful tool. "The ability to tell the stories of those who surround us, paired with digital tools that distribute messages widely, provide an unparalleled opportunity to organize on a massive scale," Wyatt said.

Intern: Lehua La'a

Lehua La'a moved to Grand Junction in August 2012 for her freshman year at Colorado Mesa University.

"Growing up on a Hawaiian island 52 miles across with a population over a million people, I was convinced that learning to thrive on the mainland would be my best chance at success," Lehua said.

In 2016, Lehua took time off from college to reevaluate her life, and found herself enthralled with the presidential elections. Politics was never something in which she had seen a future for herself: the Asiatic culture of Hawaii deemed all political talk in public as rude.

Now, with her degree in Mass Communications nearing completion and a summer internship with WCC, Lehua is on the path of a community organizer! (See story above.)

Save the date - Friday, Sept. 29

Head to the Mountainfilm!

by Marie Mitchell, Development Coordinator

Head to the Mountains.

Such an expression might well serve to promote Mountainfilm on Tour to movie and outdoor enthusiasts, but you should know that Mountainfilm is for anyone to head to.

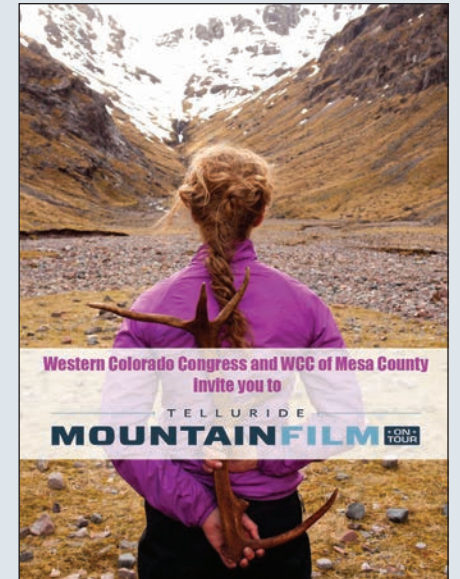
This ever-growing event is the touring version of Colorado's acclaimed Telluride Mountainfilm Festival, with an annual showing in downtown Grand Junction. Western Colorado Congress and its Mesa County affiliate will once again host "best of" features and short subjects at the historic **Avalon Theater on the evening of Friday, Sept. 29.**

Thanks to local businesses, like High Noon Solar, Triad EAP, Powderhorn and many others, along with WCC volunteers and members for making this event happen. "The tour brings a dynamic spectrum of full-length features, powerful short films and avant-garde animation with jaw-dropping adrenaline flicks, and thoughtful socially conscious and environmental awareness films," explains Seth Anderson, owner of Loki, a recurring event sponsor.

As in years past, the 2017 Mountainfilm on Tour – Grand Junction will have films as diverse as the Western Slope, and more importantly will offer real-life stories and adventures. "A friend told me about the event, and after attending one I was hooked. I can participate in an event that has my interest in an organization that I respect," enthuses WCC

member Sharon Jordan. "And both motivate me to think of how things can be done, not why they cannot."

Event details will be posted as they become available on wcccongress.org and WCC's Facebook page.



Support Mountainfilm by sponsoring, volunteering

Mountainfilm on Tour succeeds because of the support we receive. Please help WCC with this year's event by volunteering or sponsoring. Call the WCC office at 970-256-7650 or email events@wcccongress.org.

Mountainfilm in Montrose

Uncompahgre Valley Association (UVA), WCC's local affiliate in Montrose, co-sponsors Mountainfilm on Tour every November at the Pavilion. UVA is looking for a volunteer or two to head up this event starting in 2018. If you are interested, contact Beth Gibson at mesagirls2@gmail.com or (970) 208-7301.

Organizing millennials requires new media

By Lehua La'a, Summer Intern

I didn't have a clue what political organizing looked like until I met Jeriel. The organizer and grassroots activist from Western Colorado Congress had only known me for an hour before inviting me to the **Youth Organizing Summit** in Washington DC in late April. I can only guess that she saw an organizer's passion in me and wanted to introduce me to something other than the sales career I saw for myself as a communications major.

The Youth Organizing Summit was sponsored by a plethora of liberal institutions: Planned Parenthood, NAKASEC (National Korean American Service &

Education Consortium), the BUS Federation, and NextGen Climate to name a few. The goal of the summit was to bring together millennials and teach them how to politically organize for campaigns and ballot initiatives, and how to connect with others our own age.

Young people are often painted as the face of apathy, connected only to the technology in our hands and isolated from the outside world. This idea is a false narrative.

Unlike previous generations, we grew up with all of mankind's knowledge at our fingertips. This new-found power has allowed us to become more informed about social and civil unrest around the country, enlightened about climate change

and, more importantly, skeptical of information that is being spread on the internet and eager to find its source. We are not apathetic, we simply react differently than previous generations. Because of this, we need different media to reach us.

The most valuable experience from the Youth Summit was the networking and the conversations that took place. To baby boomers, millennials may seem anti-social. However, anyone with access to the internet can tap into our outspoken activist networks.

My thanks to Western Colorado Congress for enabling my trip to Washington, DC, where I found my passion for community organizing!



WCC Summer Intern Lehua La'a at the Youth Organizing Summit in Washington, DC in late April.

Give the Forest a voice!

by Emily Hornback, WCC Organizer

Western Colorado is blessed to contain one of the most diverse forest systems in the southern Rockies. The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forest includes the lakes and meadows of the Grand Mesa, the ponderosa forests of the Uncompahgre Plateau, and the craggy cliffs of the San Juans.

Whether you hike, mountain bike, bird watch, live next to or simply enjoy the views of any of these places, you need to know about the **GMUG Forest Plan**. Forest plans are long-term management documents that guide decision-making on a national forest over a 20-plus-year timeframe. And after almost 10 years of waiting, the Forest Service has started the public process to create a new plan for the GMUG.

WCC has been a champion for the preservation and sustainable management of the GMUG for decades. When a forest planning process was first launched over a decade ago, we were the driving force behind an alternative management proposal we dubbed **Mountains to Mesas (M2M)**.

M2M was a conservation management plan created jointly by scientists and citizens with the goal of protecting the water, air, wildlife and scenic splendor of our forests for generations to come. Unfortunately, the last Forest Plan was stalled by Bush-era policy reversals, and M2M stalled with it.

Now it's time to bring this vision of forest management inspired by conservation biology back to life. This summer you can help us make it happen.

The Forest Service is kicking off the process by hosting a series of open houses. Please plan to attend the one closest to you:

- **Delta:** Tuesday, July 25, 5:30 – 7:30 pm. Lincoln Elementary
- **Gunnison:** Thursday, July 27 from 5:30 – 7:30 pm. Field Western Heritage Center
- **Ridgway:** Tuesday, August 1 from 5:30 – 7:30 pm. 4H Center
- **Grand Junction:** Thursday, August 3 from 5:30 – 7:30 pm. Lincoln Park Barn
- **Telluride:** Thurs, Aug. 10, 5:30 – 7:30 pm. Wilkinson Library
- **Montrose:** Monday, August 14 from 5:30 – 7:30 pm. Montrose High School
- **Lake City:** Tuesday, August 15 from 4:30 – 6:30 pm. Lake City Community School

WCC's Public Lands Committee and local affiliates are also working together to plan events to get you out on the Forest and help you learn about the planning process. Stay tuned for more info, or contact me at emily@wccongress.org to get involved!

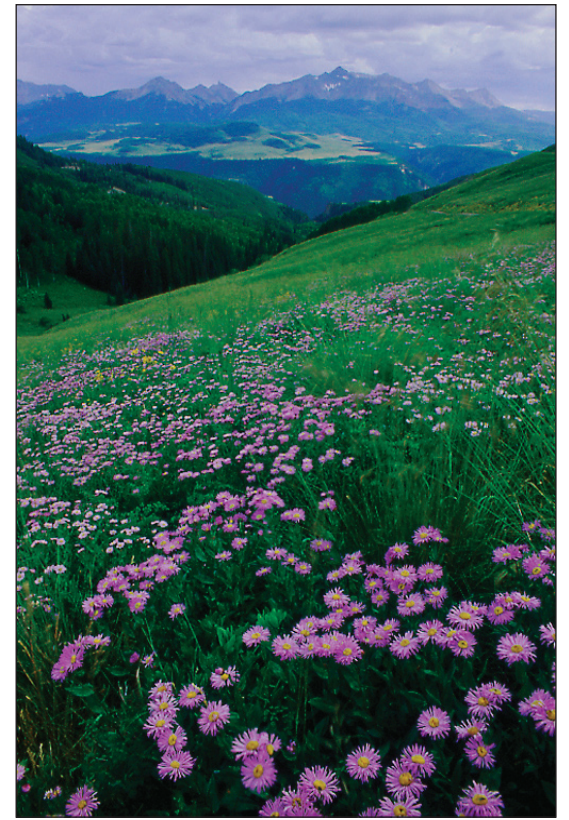


Photo from the cover of the brochure for Mountains to Mesas, a citizens' management alternative for the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests that was shelved over 10 years ago.



TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE:
The Risks of Public Investment in Carbon Capture and Sequestration (CCS)

Carbon capture not part of a low-carbon future

Carbon capture and sequestration technology (CCS) is expensive, inefficient, dirty and unreliable. By contrast, renewable energy is cleaner, cheaper and faster to deploy, according to a new WORC report, *Too Good to be True: The Risks of Public Investment in Carbon Capture and Sequestration*.

The report details the failed attempts at capturing and storing power plant carbon dioxide pollution despite billions of taxpayer dollars spent so far on the technology.

The report recommends focusing public and private resources on

affordable and technologically demonstrated clean energy sources that will result in a market-based, low-carbon energy future with cheaper utility bills, cleaner air, and a reduced threat of catastrophic global climate change.

Download a copy of the report at worc.org.

WORC (Western Organization of Resource Councils) is a seven-state network of grassroots organizations, including WCC, working to strengthen communities and shape agriculture and energy policies.

Yes, I want to join Western Colorado Congress or renew my membership!



- \$10 Student
- \$35 Individual member (\$25 limited income)
- \$55 Family member (\$35 limited income)
- \$100 Business or organization

I want to help even more!

- \$200 \$500 \$1,000 \$2,500 \$5,000 \$_____
- I want to be a sustaining member – please bill my credit card \$_____ per month.
- I'd like to learn about leaving WCC in my will or other giving options.
- I'd like to remain anonymous.

If you live in a county with a local WCC affiliate or check one of the boxes below, you will become a member of that group as well. (optional)

- Grand Valley Citizens Alliance (Garfield County)
- Ridgway-Ouray Community Council (Ouray County)
- Uncompahgre Valley Association (Montrose County)
- WCC of Mesa County (Mesa County)

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