

**Greater Arkansas River Nature Association**  
*A cooperating association for natural, cultural & historical awareness*



December 8, 2010

Hello GARNA members and friends –

2010 has been a busy, productive year for your local Nature Association.

### **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

It is GARNA's ongoing privilege to support our members and community at large by offering seminars and programs that celebrate the rich natural as well as the deep cultural and historical resources of the Greater Arkansas River Valley. In Seasons 2 and 3 of the *Our Sense of Place* year-long study program, participants explored the pinon-pine and subalpine ecosystems, clouds, weather, geothermal, indigenous people, and medicinal herbs of the Arkansas River bioregion, the place we call home. Other GARNA sponsored programs offered were:

San Luis Valley bat cave excursion  
Youth-oriented animal tracking class  
GPS instruction seminar  
*World of Health* discussion series  
Professionally led birding, wildflower and mushroom outings

*Edible Forest* permaculture series  
Three Glaciers Lake geology field trip  
Herb gardening and uses class  
Falconry program

GARNA's **member-only hiking and birding clubs** have offered many interesting and exciting activities throughout the year, and our **member-only earth friendly book club** meets once a month to discuss books about current day ecological issues.

2010 was the inaugural year for GARNA's **Upper Arkansas Valley Ecological Literacy Program**. Made possible by a grant from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the program's goals are to foster environmental stewardship and to encourage young people to explore careers within natural resource agencies. Topics include plant/wildlife life zones, the river ecosystem, and public land management. Volunteers from the US Forest Service, BLM, CO Division of Wildlife, Trout Unlimited, Southwest Conservation Corps and others assisted in implementing the program for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students in the Salida School District. In the future we hope to expand this program into the Buena Vista schools and beyond.

### **HERITAGE-RELATED ACTIVITIES**

GARNA has been extremely busy as the administrative arm of the Collegiate Peaks Scenic & Historic Byway and the Chaffee County Heritage Area Advisory Board. One of the most visible endeavors is the construction of the **Collegiate Peaks Byway Interpretive Center** at Poncha Springs. We have broken ground thanks to funding provided by the Federal Highways Byways program. This brand new facility will replace the Poncha Springs Visitor Center and is designed to be partially self-service so when it is not staffed, visitors travelling through can still obtain information to entice them to stay and explore the county. The center will also house heritage displays to help illustrate the area's sense of place.

The Heritage Board is also developing a **comprehensive wayside interpretive plan** for the Collegiate Peaks Byway as well as conducting **interviews of longtime residents** to capture their stories for future use in interpretive, educational and resource protection projects. The Heritage group is also well underway in conducting a **survey of all historic resources in the county**. This project, made possible by a grant from the Colorado State Historical Fund, will identify county heritage resources and will assist in developing awareness, enhancing understanding of preservation needs within the county, and providing a foundation for future projects within the heritage area for both county staff and citizens.

Over

**CHAPTERS and PROJECTS**

The **Salida Community Garden** continues to be a successful GARNA project providing a space for Solidans to garden for 8 years and counting. For a nominal fee, participants work their own plot and share the resources and maintenance of the garden along with the pleasure of reaping the bounty with other gardeners.

**Friends of Fourmile Chapter** offers our community a unique opportunity to partner with BLM and USFS in managing the 100K acre Fourmile Travel Management Area adjacent to Buena Vista. Friends of Fourmile volunteers offer time and energy towards maintenance and improvement projects to assure quality multi-use recreation while promoting respect for the natural and cultural resources found in the remarkable Fourmile area.

GARNA’s newest project is the **Leadville to Salida Trail Feasibility Study**. This project is assessing feasibility and beginning preliminary planning for a public access trail from Leadville to Salida along the historic Leadville Stage Road and Midland Railroad in Lake and Chaffee Counties. Spanning 60 miles, some segments would be along public roads while other sections would take the form of a non-motorized natural surface trail for hiking, biking, fishermen or horse use.

As you can see from this impressive list, GARNA is committed to taking a leadership role in the conservation and preservation of our rich and varied resources through education and collaboration. Support from our members allows us not only to continue to offer high-quality education and entertaining programs, but also to work with various groups to manifest a forward thinking community that strives to protect and maintain a healthy, rich, and diverse environment for generations to come. **As you consider your year-end charitable contributions, please think of GARNA, your local Nature Association, and help us continue these efforts.**

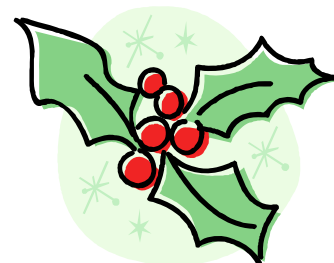
The GARNA Board sends their best wishes for a happy holiday season to you and your families.  
In Peace and Goodwill –

*Ann Graham*

Ann Graham, Board Chair

*Alison Ramsey*

Alison Ramsey, Executive Director



Pat Clark  
Jack Close  
Mary Hay

Sheila Jackson  
Ed Kinzie  
JD Longwell  
Marilyn Moore

Bruce Morrow  
Dibby Olson  
Alan Robinson

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We are most grateful for your monetary support, in an amount that works for you. GARNA is a 501c3 non-profit and your contribution is **tax-deductible**.

Please mail your contribution to: GARNA, PO Box 1522, Salida CO 81201

Amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Donated by: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_