

NICHE NEWS

The Nederland Interagency Council for Homeless Encampments (NICHE) is a collaborative organization with shared responsibilities that foster public health and safety through care for the vulnerable, stewardship of natural resources, and respect for the needs of the mountain community.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ✦ NICHE is happy to announce that we were approved as a United Way, Live United Collaborative! There are about 15 groups in Boulder and Broomfield counties that have met the qualifications for various agencies working together to solve some of our most pressing social issues.
- ✦ We are also in contact with the Institute of Behavioral Science at CU, concerning a possible study about the mountain homeless population. How connected are our homeless neighbors to nearby urban areas? How are they similar and different from other homeless populations in America and Colorado? What issues bring them this way, or send them away? What opportunities or barriers do we have to connect them even better to positive outcomes?
- ✦ NICHE has a web presence! Thanks to the Peak to Peak Housing and Human Service Alliance –the agency that originally envisioned collaborative work around mountain homelessness – we have a webpage. We have published our partner organizations and steering committee. There is a short history of our work, with a list of successes. And of course, there will be helpful information, so that anyone can share education or resource connection. Check it out at www.p2phhs.org/niche

Updates on NICHE's SHARE Program

For summer 2019, NICHE started a pilot program to hire an outreach worker, our *Summer Homeless Advocate for Residential Encampments*. The SHARE program started with three goals: first, we want to connect people experiencing homelessness, who choose to camp on public lands, to existing resources, particularly through the government and non-profit programs in Boulder; second, we want to educate the homeless community on appropriate camping practices, to make themselves and the mountain community safer; third, as the country's first study that analyzes strategies and outcomes of human service to homeless campers on public lands, we intend to learn best practices that we can share with other communities that face similar situations and problems.



The initial grant from the Boulder County Community Services Department went to hire Claudia Schaffler, who was then trained by the US Forest Service, Nederland Police department, and Boulder County Homeless Services. Through the summer she and Reverend Hansen Wendlandt, of Nederland Community Church, continued to work with those agencies, as well as the Boulder County Sheriff's office, CO Parks & Wildlife, Emergency Family Assistance Association, Clinica Family Health, Mental Health Partners, Boulder County Coordinated Entry, and the Town of Nederland.

- Claudia met 175 campers experiencing homelessness. This represented about 50% of the summer homeless population, which was lower than the last several years.
- The typical contact was a 45-year old male, homeless and wandering for over a decade. We did, however, meet several younger and older men and women, as well as families that were experiencing homelessness.
- Of the 175 clients, we met only 5 who revealed that they had already interacted with Boulder County homeless services.
- Barriers to connecting them to Boulder County services were transportation, urban anxiety, and frustration with the 'system'.
- Despite that, Claudia was able to connect 64 people to various services: Coordinated Entry, healthcare, mental health, job referral/training, transitional housing, addiction recovery, childcare, and more.
- We educated 100% of our campers about fire safety, and 97% accepted further education about wildlife safety and waste management.

For summer 2019, NICHE has received another grant from Boulder County Community Services Department! This will allow our SHARE worker, Claudia Schaffler, to expand outreach from April to October. Her objective goals this year are a) to increase contacts to 60% of the estimated homeless population, b) to increase resource connection to 40% of those we contact, and c) to increase the amount of those enlisted in Coordinated Entry by 25%. We will continue to offer education about wildfire prevention, wildlife interactions, waste management, as well as water-borne illness and weather preparation.



Stewardship Days

The Boulder Ranger District of the Roosevelt National Forest is seeking volunteers. Boulder Ranger District Recreation staff are planning on hosting a number of Stewardship Days starting in April and running through mid-June of 2019. If you are interested in participating please RSVP via e-mail to Jared Smith with the Forest Service in Boulder at jared.a.smith@usda.gov with the Date and Location you are interested in attending as the e-mail's subject line. The RSVP will help our staff can plan appropriately for the number of people. If any groups are planning on attending, only one person needs to RSVP with how many people are planning on attending.

Planned work could include campsite removal, installation of vehicle barriers, installation of buck-n-rail fence, and installation of signs. The Forest Service will provide hardhats and all necessary tools but volunteers should bring their own work boots, work gloves, eye protection, lunches and water. Participants should plan to meet the Forest Service at the desired location at 9:30 am on the dates listed below. The work areas, meeting locations and tentative dates are:

- **Saturday May 4th - Front Range Trailhead**
 - Directions: From Boulder, CO drive west on Boulder Canyon Drive (CO-119) for approximately 5.0 miles, turn left or south on Magnolia Drive and drive approximately 8.3 miles, turn right or north on Forest Service Road 357.1 and drive approximately 0.2 miles to the Trailhead parking area.
- **Saturday May 11th – West Magnolia camping area**
 - Directions: From Nederland, CO drive south on Highway 72 for approximately 1.9 miles, turn right or west on County Road 132 W, drive approximately 1.0 miles, turn left or south on Forest Road 355.1A and the trailhead parking area will be on your right.
- **Saturday June 1st – Sugarloaf Mountain Trailhead/ Switzerland Trail**
 - Directions: From Boulder, CO drive west on Boulder Canyon Drive (CO-119) for approximately 5.2 miles, turn right or north on Sugarloaf Road and drive approximately 4.7 miles, turn right or north on Sugarloaf Mountain Road (County Road 93) and drive approximately 0.8 miles to the Sugarloaf Mountain Trailhead parking area.
- **Saturday June 8th –Forest Road 453.1 (aka Rocky Point Road)**
 - Directions: From Boulder, CO drive west on Sunshine Canyon Drive for approximately 11.0 miles, continue through the town of Gold Hill on Main Street or County Road 52 and drive approximately 1.3 miles, turn left or south on Forest Road 453.1 and park near the intersection of County Road 52 and Forest Road 453.1.
- **Saturday June 8th – Ruby Gulch camping area**
 - Directions: From Nederland, CO drive north along Highway 72 for approximately 7.5 miles, turn right or east on Forest Road 328.1 and drive approximately 500 feet, turn right or south-east to continue on Forest Road 328.1 and drive approximately 0.15 miles, turn left or north on Forest Road 328.1B and park on the right side at the big open campsite.
- **Saturday June 15th – Upham Gulch/ Switzerland Trail**
 - Directions: From Nederland, CO drive north along Highway 72 for approximately 4.7 miles, turn right or east onto Forest Road 226.1 and drive approximately 250 feet to the large parking area on the right.
- **Other Forest Service locations that already have support from the local communities:**
 - East Magnolia Road area (Forest Road 321)
 - Peewink Mountain Road area (Forest Road 332.1)

New Boulder Law Enforcement Officer

Andrew Young is the new U.S. Forest Service Law Enforcement Officer stationed in Boulder, replacing longtime officer Paul Krisanits who retired in May 2018.

Andrew comes to the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest from the Nez-Perce Clearwater National Forest in Idaho where he has been working in the range program and has also had the opportunity to work with many other programs including recreation, timber, and special uses in addition to Forest Service law enforcement.

Andrew is currently in Federal Law Enforcement Training Center training. Then he's on to 12 weeks of field training. He is expected to be back on the district by August.

