



# Schedule of Events

## Rocky Mountain National Park Biennial Research Conference

*Park Stewardship: From Discovery to Decision*



### Wednesday March 4, 2026

8:00 – 8:30 AM	Morning Mixer and Coffee	
<b>Welcome</b>		
8:30 – 8:50 AM	Gary Ingram CDRLC Staff	Conference Introduction, Land Acknowledgement, and Awards
<b>Fire Effects and Forest Management</b>		
8:50 – 8:55 AM	Moderator	Session Introduction
8:55 – 9:15 AM	Jill Baron	Distinguishing Wildfire and Anthropogenic Sources of Nitrogen Deposition in Loch Vale Watershed, Rocky Mountain National Park
9:15 – 9:35 AM	Leah McTigue	Colorado Fires and Biodiversity
9:35 – 10:00 AM	Nate Williamson Christina Fossum	A tale of two fires: Exploring Forest community change within RMNP's Lodgepole Pine ecosystem following the East Troublesome Fire and the re-introduction of prescribed fire to RMNP's front country Ponderosa pine ecosystem.
10:00 – 10:20 AM	Benjamin Helms	Terrestrial Laser Scanning Estimates of Frequent-Fire Forest Structure in the Colorado Front Range
10:20 – 10:40 AM	Kevin Willson	A management tool to visualize restoration treatments that achieve historical overstory structure from present-day forest structure
10:40 – 11:00 AM	Break	
<b>Learning from Historic Structures</b>		
11:00 – 11:05 AM	Moderator	Session Introduction
11:05 – 11:25 AM	Nicole Arendt	This is NOT HGTV – Mission 66 and Learning to Love and Preserve Boring Midcentury Buildings
11:25 – 11:45 AM	Michael Welsh	Archival Research, Document Analysis, and Database Development of Historic Irrigation Structures in Rocky Mountain National Park
11:45 – 1:00 PM	Lunch	
<b>Next Generation Science: Rocky Mountain Conservancy Research Fellows</b>		
1:00 – 1:10 PM	Moderator	Session Introduction
1:10 – 1:30 PM	Chris Maienza	Arboreal Armageddon: Post-fire Plant Communities in Rocky Mountain National Park
1:30 – 1:50 PM	Theo Kuhn	Long-term stream temperature trends, sensitivity, and the role of groundwater in RMNP streams
1:50 – 2:10 PM	Katie Gannon	Algal Blooms in Mountain Lakes: What drives their growth? And what are the consequences for nearshore biogeochemistry?
2:10 – 2:30 PM	John Lambert	A field survey of the preparedness of wilderness day hikers and trail runners in Rocky Mountain National Park
2:30 – 2:50 PM	Break	
<b>Challenges and Changes for Alpine Ecosystems</b>		
*Presentations within this session are available virtually. The link for virtual participation can be found at <a href="https://go.nps.gov/RMNPConference2026">go.nps.gov/RMNPConference2026</a>		
2:50 – 3:00 PM	Moderator	Session Introduction
3:00 – 3:20 PM	Daniel F. Doak Claire Powers	Analysis of GLORIA alpine plant community data across the southern Rockies: Climate and species traits shape responses of the alpine flora to a changing world
3:20 – 3:40 PM	Chris Ray	Will pikas be lost from the park?
3:40 – 4:10 PM	Ann Mills Michelle Gibbons	Rocky Mountain National Park Alpine Tundra Restoration: Past, Present, and Future
4:10 – 4:45 PM	<b>Panel: Alpine Tundra Ecosystem Stewardship</b> <i>Join park staff and partners for a Question and Answer panel discussion on alpine ecosystem stewardship.</i> Kyle Patterson – Management Specialist, Jim Bromberg – Restoration Ecologist Mitch Hauptman – Law Enforcement Specialist	
4:45 – 4:50 PM	CDRLC Staff	Day 1 Wrap Up



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### Thursday March 5, 2026

<b>Poster Session</b>		
8:00 – 9:00 AM	The poster session is an opportunity to read about a variety of research projects and activities in the park and engage in discussion directly with the presenter. Join us for coffee and light breakfast snacks.	
<b>Welcome</b>		
9:00 – 9:05 AM	CDRLC Staff	Welcome and Introduction
<b>Restoration in Action: Wetland Ecosystems</b>		
9:05 – 9:10 AM	Moderator	Session Introduction
9:10 – 9:30 AM	Isabel de Silva Shewell	From Design to Digging in: Updates on Wetland Restoration in the Kawuneeche Valley
9:30 – 9:50 AM	Itai Boj dak-Yates	Stream Restoration Monitoring on Beaver Creek, Kawuneeche Valley, Rocky Mountain National Park
9:50 – 10:10 AM	Linda Zeigenfuss	Coming of Age... EVMP at 15 Years
10:10 – 10:30 AM	Hanem Abouezz Will Deacy	High-altitude thermal infrared aerial surveys for estimating moose populations and demographics in Rocky Mountain National Park
10:30 – 10:35 AM	CDRLC Staff	Announcements
10:35 – 10:50 AM	Break	
10:50 – 11:50 AM	<b>Conversation Café: Exploring Wetland Ecosystems</b> Join RMNP staff and partners for structured, small-group discussions on wetland ecosystems and their importance in the park. <i>Advanced Sign Up is Required for Participation</i>	
11:50 AM – 1:00 PM	Lunch	
<b>Science for Adaptive Wildlife Management</b>		
1:00 – 1:10 PM	Moderator	Session Introduction
1:10 – 1:30 PM	Rachel Billings	A Tale of Two Pikas: Acoustic & Genetic Characterization of Hybrid Zone Dynamics
1:30 – 1:50 PM	Airy Peralta	Accounting for thermal refugia in American pika habitat in Rocky Mountain National Park
1:50 – 2:10 PM	Emily Golden-Beam	Coyote Microbiomes Reveal Biological Responses to Human Recreation and Urbanization
2:10 – 2:30 PM	Boyd Wright	The Poudre Headwaters Project: A Cornerstone of Greenback Cutthroat Trout Recovery Efforts
2:30 – 2:50 PM	Break	
<b>Understanding Change with Long Term Monitoring</b>		
2:50 – 3:00 PM	Moderator	Session Introduction
3:00 – 3:20 PM	Noah Estrada	Vegetation Shifts in the Colorado Front Range, 1972-2025
3:20 – 3:40 PM	Scott Rashid	Boreal Owl ( <i>Aegolius funereus</i> ) and Northern Saw-whet Owl ( <i>Aegolius acadicus</i> ) Research in RMNP
3:40 – 4:00 PM	Mary Jade Farruggia	Long-term trends in the biogeochemistry of Rocky Mountain headwater lakes reveal complex patterns and drivers
4:00 – 4:20 PM	Jennifer Nestler	From Backlog to Action: Collaborative Data Management in the Rocky Mountain Network
4:20-4:30 PM	CDRLC Staff	Conference Wrap Up