



BLUFF
LAKE
NATURE
CENTER

Wildlife Refuge ~ Outdoor Classroom

BLUFF LAKE NATURE CENTER



2020 IMPACT REPORT

BLNC TEAM

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RACHEL CROUCH
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MAGGIE WILLDEN
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

HEIDI PFEIFFER
EDUCATION MANAGER

JACOB RETA
SITE MANAGER

CARLY WINNER
AMERICORPS EDUCATOR

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BetterHelp



Executive Director Note



2020 was a transformational year for BLNC. Providing families and students with experiences in nature close to their homes was proven to be even more important than we could have imagined. Despite the challenges, our organization grew, got stronger, and started building for the future with the launch of a truly transformational \$1,000,000 Endowment Fund (see page 9).

Every day this year I was reminded of how essential BLNC is for the community. I experienced the joy radiating from kids when, after months of uncertainty and isolation, they were able to see their friends and play in the creek. I saw the excitement as a mother was able to see her adult daughter for the first time in months, as they enjoyed a safe walk around the lake.

I want to offer a sincere thank you to everyone who has supported BLNC over the past year, including our donors, partners, corporate and foundational sponsors, and our thousands of visitors. Finally I'd like to thank our BLNC team, including our staff, board members, and volunteers, for living our mission of making nature accessible and showing that BLNC is safe, trustworthy, committed, and connected.

-Rachel Crouch, Executive Director

"I experienced the joy radiating from kids when, after months of uncertainty and isolation, they were able to see their friends and play in the creek."



As an urban outdoor classroom and wildlife refuge, BLNC is located within 5 miles of thousands of households and dozens of schools. As our community has grown around us, we continue to adapt to offer resources for our guests. In 2020, our site visitation increased by almost 50% to more than 85,000 visitors, and we were able to engage in person and virtually with over 9,000 people. We added several "nature play areas" around our site, giving our youngest visitors some exciting and engaging opportunities to get their hands (and knees, and faces...) dirty while giving parents a chance to sit back and relax - if only for a few minutes.

We can't thank you, our supporters, enough for all you've done to help us grow to meet your needs. Thank you for your volunteer hours, for your attendance at our events, and for your financial support. We truly cannot do it without you. We look forward to seeing you on site in 2021!

- Jon Fitzpatrick, Board President

Board President Note



NATURE in the CITY

With national parks closed and state guidelines asking people to recreate within 10 miles of their homes, thousands of families sought refuge at our site. Our site management team worked hard to keep up with this increased usage through site restoration projects, new signage, and more.

84,351 Site Visitors
a 46.7% increase from 2019

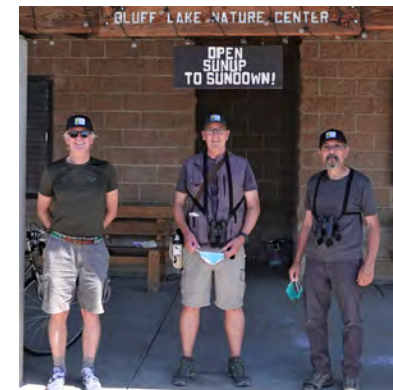


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- 172 Volunteers
- 1,300+ Hours of Work
- \$35,000+ Value of Volunteer Time
- 8 Week Paid Site Internship
- 3 Eagle Scout Projects
- 3 Major Site Enhancements (Firepit, Shade Pergola, Info Kiosk)
- 100+ Trees Painted and Protected from Beavers
- 8 New Benches
- 3 New Nature Play Areas
- 60+ Hours Mosquito Mitigation
- 300 Trees Surveyed



American Bittern



BLUFF LAKE NATURE CENTER

OPEN SUNUP TO SUNDOWN!



Vermilion Flycatcher

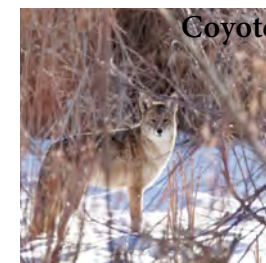


Ross's Goose



Magnolia Warbler

It has been great year for birding at Bluff Lake! 21 new bird species seen in 2020.



Coyote



Milkweed Beetle



Mule Deer



Tiger Swallowtail

Welcome!
¡Bienvenido!

BLUFF LAKE NATURE CENTER

GATE CLOSURES AT SUNSET
EL PORTON CERRARA A LA PUESTA DEL SOL

NO DOGS
NO SE PERMITEN PERROS

NO BIKES
NO BICICLETAS

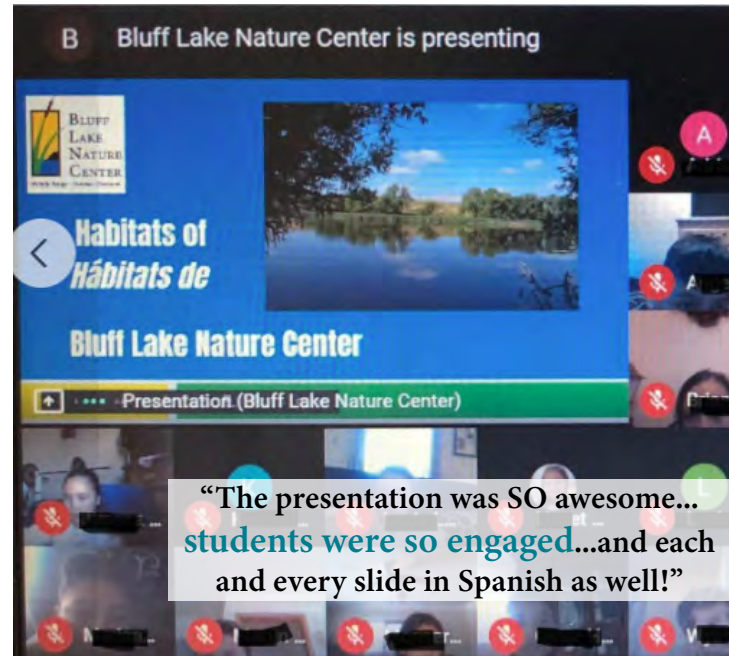
Explore • Discover • Enjoy



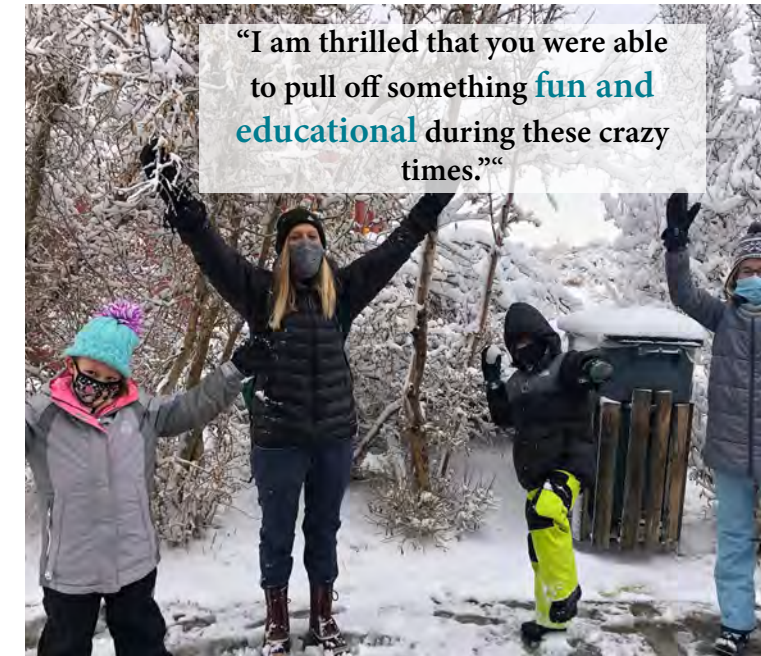
New Signage by → Ecos Communications

EXPLORING and LEARNING

This year taught us that family programs and school programs are intrinsically linked, especially as parents were asked to take on the role of teachers, so we expanded the scope of our Education and Outreach programs to better serve the needs of the community and be more flexible. We created bilingual virtual content that helped teachers and parents support students, as well as safe outdoor programs that limited group size but still allowed kids the chance to get outside. Overall our team worked with nearly 10,000 students and families.



"The presentation was SO awesome... students were so engaged...and each and every slide in Spanish as well!"



"I am thrilled that you were able to pull off something fun and educational during these crazy times."



"Our 5 year old became 'the expert' on Bluff Lake and later showed us secret spots like where some bones were, and where certain insects lived. He clearly loved it!"



"We had a blast! Thank you for helping to make Halloween feel special this year and for giving us a chance to connect with each other and with nature."

FAMILIES SCHOOLS

- 6,500+ Students Learning In-Person or Virtually
- 30+ Virtual Field Trips
- 92% of Program Attendees came for FREE
- 3 Volunteers 30+ Hours Translating Virtual Content and Facilitating Programs
- 25+ FREE Onsite Family Programs
- 150,000+ Engaged on Social Media
- 98 Girl Scouts
- 297 After School Students
- 785 at Boo on the Bluff

SUMMER CAMP

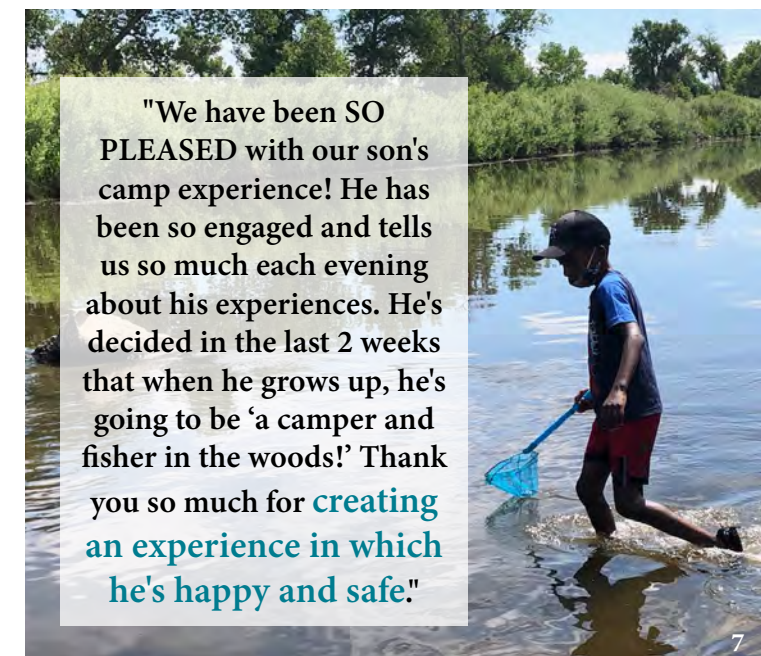
- 12 Weeks of Summer Camp
- 302 Summer Campers
- 21 Junior Counselors
- 2 Girls Inc. Interns
- 42 Full or Partial Scholarships Totaling Over \$7,500
- 100% of Parents Likely or Highly Likely to Recommend BLNC Camp to a Friend

PARTNERS

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| The Urban Farm | SOLE- Colorado Parks and Wildlife |
| Sand Creek Regional Greenway | Environmental Learning for Kids |
| Groundwork Denver | Boys and Girls Clubs |
| Nature's Educators | Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education |
| Girls Inc | |
| Denver Forest School | |



"Thank you for keeping the park open, I honestly don't know what our family would have done without it!"

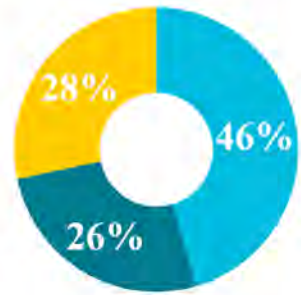


"We have been SO PLEASED with our son's camp experience! He has been so engaged and tells us so much each evening about his experiences. He's decided in the last 2 weeks that when he grows up, he's going to be 'a camper and fisher in the woods!' Thank you so much for creating an experience in which he's happy and safe."

FINANCIALS

2020 Revenue \$471,800

- Grants \$214,200
- Donations \$124,100
- Earned Income \$133,500



2020 Expenses \$417,000

- Educational Programs and Site Management \$241,000
- Administrative \$80,000
- Fundraising/Events \$26,000
- Onsite Capital Projects \$70,000



**2020 Financials have not yet been audited

Community support makes our work possible.
Thank you to our 2020 donors and sponsors over \$1,000!



David and Jody Smith
 Hillary and Aron Dobos
 Jonathan and Mollie Fitzpatrick
 Peter and Terri Konrad
 Harold and Susan Skramstad
 George and Katherine Ho
 Susie Crane and Gary Prado
 Allie Wells
 Eleanor and Bill Revelle
 Kevin Fitzpatrick and Lon Mason
 Mary Downs
 Kourtney and David Santucci
 Steve and Jackie Norris
 Jared and Laura Luner
 Anonymous

Building a Better Future

The Hadley Smith Bluff Lake Nature Center Fund

The Fund was launched by a \$1,000,000 donation to Bluff Lake by the Smith Family (David and Jody, daughter Hillary and husband Aron, grandchildren Peter, Rodger, and Penryn), in honor of their late daughter Hadley. Words cannot begin to describe how humbled and grateful the BLNC team is to the Smith Family for bestowing this gift on our organization. Our mission to make nature accessible resonates with many who have discovered what a special place BLNC is, and we are thrilled that the Smith Family has decided to invest in our future, and the future of this community. Now we get to imagine and dream bigger than ever before about our work. We can lengthen our vision and create a new reality for BLNC. We will use this extraordinary gift for an even stronger future as we continue to help the community respect, protect, and connect with our natural world. We hope you will join us in celebrating Hadley and this extremely generous and transformational gift.

Hadley and her dog, Sage



Memorializing Hadley and her life well lived.

Hadley always found peace and strength being present in nature: from weekend hikes and camping trips as a kid, to as an adult daily 7AM walks in her Park Hill community with her mom and dog Sage, to spotting arctic foxes in Iceland or red foxes in Park Hill, to hiking or snowshoeing to a favorite ridge top mountain meadow.

Nature energized and sustained her. She cherished its abundance, beauty, joy and omnipresence. She believed deeply in social justice and environmental stewardship. She was an accomplished entrepreneur, believing in collaboration, teamwork, and community.

Given all of this, the mission of BLNC aligns extraordinarily well with Hadley's values and will continue to honor her legacy for years to come.

How does the Fund work?

The \$1,000,000 gift will be held and invested by The Denver Foundation. Each year, BLNC can withdraw 4.5% of the fund's year-end balance (or \$50,000, whichever is higher) to support:

- Building significantly larger and longer-term philanthropic support for BLNC
- Imagining the future of BLNC, which could include a capital campaign and construction of a "Signature Building" onsite
- Starting in 2027, other BLNC needs as approved by our Board of Directors



Questions about the Hadley Smith Fund? Want to know more?

Email Rachel Crouch, Executive Director at rcrouch@blufflake.org



2020 in PHOTOS





Questions about this report?

Email us info@blufflake.org
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Photos in report courtesy of

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Explore Constantly, George Ho,
Joey Negreann, Mark Silverstein,
Kenna Sue Trickey, Diverge
Productions, April Thein, and
BLNC Staff



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