

# CAL WOOD EDUCATION CENTER



## 2021 PROGRAM REPORT



## 2021 NUMBERS

- Served 2,445 people
- 1,433 participated in programs
- 1,333 youth participants
- 972 Latinx participants (68%)
- \$139,006 in scholarships
- 53,522 hours of nature immersion!

# 2021: RECOVERY + RESTORATION

2021 is truly a year of recovery and restoration. Despite pandemic and fire challenges, Cal-Wood was able to connect with families, immerse kids in nature, engage volunteers in meaningful projects, launch innovative partnerships, and complete many of our emergency restoration projects.

As we plan for 2022, it is with cautious optimism. Most school districts plan to return to Cal-Wood in 2022, and our spring schedule is filling up. We are hiring and training staff, and I cannot wait for the familiar energy of new staff and the return of students. This year, we will also build upon our family programming with our Latino Family Camp Expansion Initiative and one of the silver linings of the pandemic, our successful and in-demand School-Age Family Program.

In 2021, we survived at 24% program capacity - but for 2022, we are preparing to be 'back in business' at 70% program capacity which is exciting and full of risk.

This coming year is critical for Cal-Wood's sustainability, and we need our community's support so that 2022 can be Cal-Wood's year to REBUILD back stronger, heal our land, and set our course for the future.

As we close out 2021 and prepare for 2022, my gratitude goes out to our amazing community.

Muchas gracias,

**RAFAEL SALGADO**

*Executive Director*

## 2022 GOALS

- Serve 6,940 total (70% of a typical year)
- Engage 5,440 people through programs
- 4,560 youth participants
- 2,980 Latinx participants
- **170,300 hours of nature immersion!**

**2022 SCHOLARSHIP NEED: \$233,000**

# FIRE RESTORATION + VOLUNTEER PROJECTS

Our first season of fire restoration was a resounding success! What we have learned is that fire restoration is not about our trees and forests, but about restoring the whole Ponderosa forest ecosystem.

In 2021, we completed many of our emergency restoration projects - stabilizing soil and removing hazard trees. Sixty acres of hazardous trees were removed and mulched on site at Cal-Wood. The mulch was then distributed by helicopter over 240 acres in our moderate to high burn severity areas. This work will reduce post-fire water runoff and erosion in the burned areas while adding nutrients to the soil promoting plant and tree growth. We are so thankful for the partnership with Boulder County and NRCS for this very important, half million dollar project.

## 2021 NUMBERS

- 60 acres of burned trees removed and 240 acres of aerial mulching
- Thinned out 20 acres of green forest
- Used \$177,000 of funds raised
- 29 volunteer events with 25 partners
- 417 volunteers donated 2502 hours valued at \$65K



## 2021 VOLUNTEER GROUPS

Volunteers are integral to Cal-Wood's restoration! In 2021, volunteers planted willows to help minimize soil erosion and deposits in the creek, fixed hay bales, and seeded grass.

Raymond Jones BS Group  
BUUMP  
Boulder Junior Rangers  
Mile High Youth Corps  
Northern CO Pheasants Forever  
Colorado Young Leaders  
Left Hand Watershed Center  
CUCC Group

Backpackers Pantry  
Niwot High School  
Wildland Restoration Volunteers  
Cottonwood Changemakers  
Nature Kids Lafayette  
Heidi Lewis Church Group  
Natural Habitat Adventures

Cemex/LHWC Volunteers  
Boulder Boy Scout Group  
YES Coalition Teens  
New Vista High School  
Colorado Parks and Wildlife  
Namaste  
BUUMP  
Cottonwood: AXL Academy

# SCHOOL-AGE FAMILY PROGRAM



Cal-Wood launched the School-Age Family Program in 2020 as a pandemic adaptation of our school programs so that students could still experience Cal-Wood even if they couldn't come with their schools. During each weekend long program, groups of families stay in Cal-Wood cabins, and Cal-Wood instructors lead educational and experiential programming that provides opportunity for valuable academic enrichment and family adventure.

In 2021, we held 19 weekend events in partnership with Nature Kids/Jóvenes de la Naturaleza, the Sheridan Inspire Initiative, Bixby, and Bear Creek Elementary. Because of its success and demand, we are excited to expand this program in 2022!



## 2021 NUMBERS

- 608 family members
- 480 from low-income families representing 80%
- 19 weekend events
- \$70,024 in scholarships
- 18,240 hours of nature immersion!



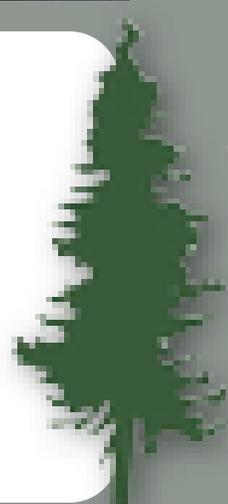
Making seed balls for restoration efforts



## 2022 GOALS

- 800 family members
- 600 from low-income families representing 75%
- 20 two-day events
- 24,000 hours of nature immersion!

**SCHOLARSHIP NEED:  
\$52,000**



# LATINO FAMILY CAMPS



During each weekend Latino Family Camp, family members are fully immersed in nature - camping, hiking, fishing, mountain biking, summiting peaks, and building connections with others and confidence with accomplishment of each new outdoor activity. From scholarships to gear, we strive to break down barriers for participation. All activities are led in Spanish and Bilingual by professional Latinos, recruited from the same community that we serve.

## EXPANSION INITIATIVE

Even with demonstrated success and unmet demand (800% growth since 2014), Cal-Wood is still the only organization engaging Latino families through overnight camping at this level in Colorado. This is why we launched our expansion initiative. Through this effort, We seek to empower other organizations to implement Latino Family Camps in their communities. We plan to build partnerships, guide partners through the process and create the resources necessary to educate and inspire organizations statewide to engage a growing community of Latino explorers and nature lovers!

## 2021 NUMBERS

- 410 family members
- 89 families
- 10 weekend events
- \$32,320 in scholarships
- **8,200 hours of nature immersion!**



## 2022 GOALS

- 960 family members
- 240 families
- 24 camps including:
  - 9 at Cal-Wood
  - 4 at Rocky Mountain National Park
  - 2 at Snow Mountain Ranch
  - 4 at CO State + County Parks
  - Camps in Leadville (2), CO springs (1), Trinidad (1), and Grand Junction (1))as part of our expansion program
- 19,200 hours of nature immersion!

**SCHOLARSHIP  
NEED:  
\$46,000**

# SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Cal-Wood's school programs are at the heart of our organization, and in a typical year, we serve more than 4,000 K-8 students through a 3-day, 2-night immersive outdoor experience with their school.

Sadly, due to pandemic restrictions, most public school districts did not allow field trips again in 2021. We hosted four school groups in the spring and five in the fall from Friends School, Boulder Country Day, Aspen Ridge, and Highlands Elementary.

## 2021 NUMBERS

- 230 students
- 8,970 hours of nature immersion

## HANDS-ON LEARNING + THE BURN AREA

We are prioritizing projects that focus on safety so that we can begin to use the burned land as part of our outdoor classroom - to teach students who come to Cal-Wood about fire ecology, fire restoration, and life after fire. We have already begun to integrate wildfire ecology and behavior into our K-12 curriculum; students can observe firsthand the impact of the Calwood fire, and then, as an extension, they are engaged in restoration/mitigation activities and field-based research.

## SCHOOLS PLAN TO RETURN IN 2022!

Most school districts plan to return to Cal-Wood in 2022, and our schedule is filling up. We are hiring and training staff as we prepare for 70% capacity in 2022.

## 2022 GOALS

- 3,500 total students
- 1,750 Low-income students
- 1,312 Latinx students
- 136,500 hours of nature immersion

**SCHOLARSHIP  
NEED:  
\$80,000**



# SUMMER CAMP 2021

In 2021, Cal-Wood offered a limited season of our residential summer camp including 5 sessions for youth entering grades 4-10. This year, campers stayed in the cabins only since our summer camp tent areas are mostly in the burn area.

Summer days at Cal-Wood were filled with fishing, archery, hiking, arts, music, storytelling, and mountain biking. The best part was seeing our campers build their self-esteem with each new activity!



## 2021 NUMBERS

- 173 summer campers
- 5 sessions
- \$34,517 in scholarships distributed to 70 campers
- 17,992 hours of nature immersion

## 2022 GOALS

- 140 summer campers
- 70 low-income campers
- 4 sessions
- 14,560 hours of nature immersion

**SCHOLARSHIP  
NEED:  
\$30,000**



# HIGH SCHOOL RESEARCH PROGRAM

In summer 2021, Cal-Wood, CU Science Discovery and Thorne Nature Experience collaborated to run a pilot 5-day residential field course for 12 high school students, mainly teens of color. Throughout the course, teens worked with scientists from CSU and CU as well as other community partners, including Boulder Fire, The Nature Conservancy and the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute, to learn about wildfire, its impacts and strategies for restoring western forests in an era of climate change. Participants took tree core samples, used a drone to record images of the forest from above, and collected vegetation and ground cover data. They also collaborated with a writer and artist to create a community art installation at the site as well as learned about the local Latino history.



The program culminated with a re-seeding project in which participants distributed pine seed balls in the burned area. Immediately following the field course, teens shared what they had learned as they helped facilitate field activities during a weekend camping trip for families from their community.



**WE ARE EXCITED TO BUILD UPON THIS PILOT IN 2022!**

## 2022 GOALS

- 40 high school students
- 100% low-income
- 400 hours of nature immersion

**SCHOLARSHIP NEED:  
\$25,000**

# WILDFIRE RESEARCH + EDUCATION

The Calwood fire changed our land forever - but we believe that it also created opportunity for our organization and our community.

We plan to transform our land into a research and education center for fire ecology, restoration, and fire mitigation to further the regional understanding of how fires are affecting the Front Range. This will include work to:

- Integrate wildfire ecology into our time-tested K-12 programs;
- Engage high school students in authentic research where they can help to further scientific knowledge on fire mitigation and restoration;
- Partner with universities and land management agencies on wildfire ecology, restoration, and mitigation research projects;
- Offer workshops for private landowners about fire mitigation; and
- Implement and monitor long-term restoration projects conducted by volunteers and professionals.

In 2021, we formalized an advisory committee to guide us with this new and exciting wildfire research and education center. These experts are from CSU, CU, Boulder County, State Forest Service, US Forest Service, Left Hand Watershed Center, and The Nature Conservancy.

**Our vision is that with research, restoration, engagement, and education, Cal-Wood can help the West to be better prepared for future massive wildfires that we are experiencing due to climate change.**