

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025





📷 [Top] Devonshire [Middle Left] Jason Kolaczowski [Bottom Right] CMC Youth Education Staff

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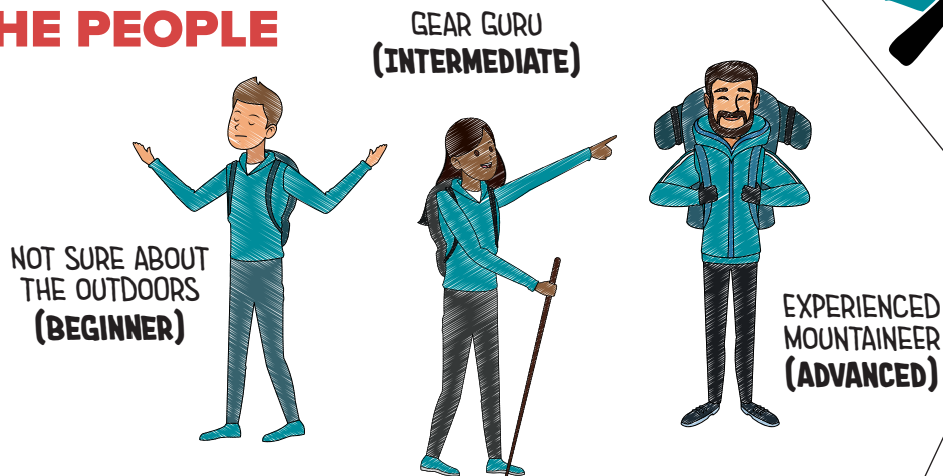
📷 Cover photo by CMC Member Leah Rosenthal, "I took the CMC Alpine Scrambling Course and my confidence on rock and exposed terrain skyrocketed from there. I can't wait for more of these epic routes next season!"

THE CONTEXT

COLORADO'S POPULATION IS **EXPLODING!!!**



THE PEOPLE



THE PLAN

LIFE IS BETTER AT 14,000'

THE FUTURE OF MOUNTAIN ADVENTURE + EDUCATION IN COLORADO



THE IMPACTS

STUDENT ---> MENTOR

EDUCATION | INCLUSION | PERSONAL GROWTH | FULFILLMENT

I WISH ---> I AM NEW ADVENTURE PARTNERS RICHNESS OF LIFE

THE OUTCOME

VIBRANT
COMMUNITY

EMPOWERED
INDIVIDUALS

CARED FOR
LANDS



CORE VALUES

At its core, CMC supports Colorado's mountains and community. That's what we've been doing for more than 100 years, and it's what we'll continue to do when the next strategic plan builds on this one.

These values are the driving force behind our strategic plan. Every piece of the plan—every goal, metric, and action item—serves one or more of our core values.

COMMUNITY.

Passionate people are the bedrock of our mountain community and all our work. We are a welcoming and vibrant club that values our community.

EDUCATION.

Our commitment to outdoor training and education is our legacy. By equipping Coloradans with the skills and confidence they need to move through the mountains, we honor and safeguard the people we love.

CONSERVATION AND STEWARDSHIP.

Stewarding and conserving wild spaces is at our core. We proactively protect these landscapes so that future generations can enjoy them.

ADVENTURE.

We know mountains can provide dramatic, life-changing experiences. We offer countless recreational, educational, and conservation-focused opportunities that inspire a passion for challenge in the outdoors.

MISSION

The mission statement of the Colorado Mountain Club was written in 1912 and has remained unchanged for over 100 years.

To unite the energy, interest, and knowledge of the students, explorers, and lovers of the mountains of Colorado;

Collect and disseminate information regarding the Rocky Mountains on behalf of science, literature, art, and recreation;

Stimulate public interest in our mountain area;

Encourage the preservation of forests, flowers, fauna, and natural scenery; and

Render readily accessible the alpine attractions of this region.



INTRODUCTION

Colorado's wild spaces are some of the most pristine and beloved landscapes on the planet. I've felt their draw since 1993, when I would come from my home in Oklahoma to explore our Rocky Mountains. While the mountains age almost imperceptibly, a lot has changed in the decades since. For one thing, I now get to call Colorado home. But our mountains and our community need more leaders/partners, stewards, and educators with each passing day. For over 100 years, the Colorado Mountain Club has cultivated mountain leaders through our adventure programming, education, and conservation efforts. Over the past century and into the next, these efforts have been and will be our organizational bedrock.

That bedrock is a stabilizing force on a planet that these days spins ever more quickly. Colorado's population is swelling, technology is changing the adventure landscape, and our community—and its needs—are evolving rapidly. To understand and address these changes, in 2018, the CMC embarked on a new strategic planning process.

Our organization's unique challenge was to stay true to our founding members' values—continuing the legacy of those cutting-edge, hob-nailed, hard-hitting mountaineers—while meeting the needs of a changing Colorado. Fortunately, our members have been there to guide us every step of the way.

This process began with you. Last winter, you showed up in force to our member engagement sessions to tell us what you wanted from your CMC. You answered our surveys to ensure we were moving in the right direction, and you made your voice heard at our town hall meeting this fall. All of this input made it possible for us to envision an extraordinary future, to shape a strategic plan around you, and to begin executing boldly in 2020 and beyond.

I'm thrilled to present this plan to you because I believe it truly reflects what you've asked for. You have helped us plan the expedition. Today, we are at the beginning of a long and rewarding climb, and we ask you to tie in with us again as we lead our mountain community into a new and exciting era.

Upward,



Keegan Young
Executive Director





📷 [Top Left] Marisa Jarae [Top Middle] Grace Hamilton [Bottom Left] Marisa Jarae [Right] Keith Ganger



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Marisa Jarae

In June 2018, the Colorado Mountain Club embarked on a strategic planning process to keep the CMC on the cutting edge of mountain education, adventure, and stewardship for generations to come. The first step was a stakeholder analysis, and things accelerated when our new Executive Director joined

the team in September. By January 2019, we engaged Golden-based Bonfire Collective to facilitate member engagement sessions around the state. After multiple member surveys, a renewal of the CMC values, a board retreat, and a town hall-style meeting, our board approved the new strategic plan on September 24, 2019.

THIS STRATEGIC PLAN IS BASED ON A FEW UNDEBATABLE TRUTHS WE DISCOVERED ABOUT WHAT CMC MEMBERS WANT DURING OUR INFORMATION GATHERING PHASE. OUR MEMBERSHIP:

- Wants a younger, more diverse membership base;
- Values trips and educational offerings, and wants to see more of them in the future;
- Knows we need to recruit a greater number of capable trip leaders;
- Values local groups and wants to see the state office strike a balance between autonomy and support; and
- Is looking for a way to connect with others who share their values.

OUR STRATEGIC GOALS FALL INTO SIX DISTINCT CATEGORIES:

- Adventure & Experiences: Inspire every Coloradan to explore
- Education: Be Colorado's first choice for outdoor learning
- Conservation & Stewardship: Strengthen and enhance conservation programs across Colorado
- Community: Expand and enrich Colorado's Mountain Community
- Leadership & Reputation: Be recognized as a leader in outdoor education, conservation, and adventure in Colorado and the nation
- Institutional Stability: Safeguard the next 100 years

**614 MEMBERS
AND 263
NONMEMBERS
SURVEYED**

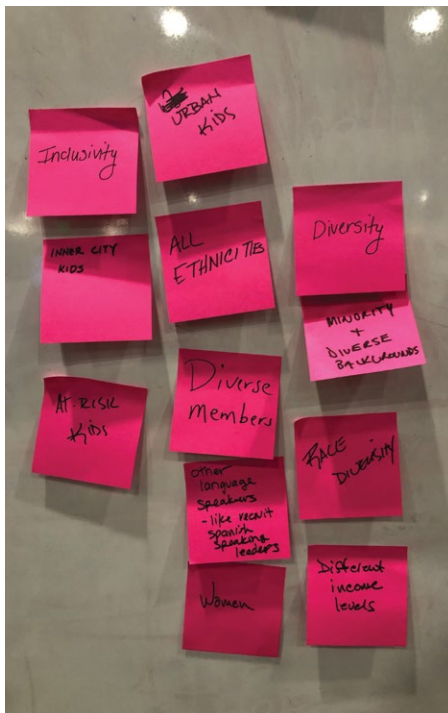
**124 MEMBERS
ATTENDED
ENGAGEMENT
SESSIONS**



**372 HOURS OF
IN-PERSON INPUT**



**1,389
COLLECTIVE YEARS
OF MEMBERSHIP EXPERIENCE
CHANNELED**



ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS IN:

- BOULDER
- FORT COLLINS
- COLORADO SPRINGS
- ASPEN/ROARING FORK
- DENVER

PROCESS

STRATEGIC PLAN TIMELINE

PLANNING: MAY–DECEMBER 2018

- SWOT Analysis
- New Executive Director hired
- Bonfire Collective selected as contractor
- Deliverables: timeline for process, engagement sessions planned

ENGAGEMENT: JANUARY–APRIL 2019

- 5 Engagement Sessions in January
- Member Survey #1
- Outdoor Enthusiast Survey
- Board Retreat
- Deliverables: insights from all the sessions, survey results, list of undebatables supported by both

ANALYSIS: MAY–AUGUST 2019

- Preliminary Goals and Objectives by Staff
- Revise Values of Organization by Staff
- Deliverables: Draft Plan

FEEDBACK AND FINAL PLAN: SEPTEMBER 2019

- Board of Directors Town Hall
- Member Survey #2
- Board of Directors Meeting
- Deliverables: Final Plan



Marisa Jarae

ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

Starting in January 2019, we held five member engagement sessions with 124 CMC members across the state. We traveled to the Roaring Fork Valley, Colorado Springs, Fort Collins, Boulder, and Denver to hear from members who have nearly 1,400 collective years of membership with CMC.

During those sessions, we asked members what they think of our existing programs, where we should be focusing our educational efforts, who CMC should be serving, why they value their membership, and how the state office can better serve them locally and organizationally.

We learned a ton from those sessions, and we used the results to build a survey for all our members to chime in about where we should be focusing our energy over the next five years and beyond.

SURVEYS

Following the five engagement sessions around Colorado, CMC published a survey to both its membership as well as people who were not CMC members but were active outdoor enthusiasts in Colorado. The surveys were developed to check the findings from the engagement sessions and gather additional information on what the larger outdoor community wants from Colorado Mountain Club.

More than 600 members responded, and over 200 non-members responded to a separate survey to help us understand what might inspire them to join our ranks.

"TRUE NORTH"

Themes That Emerged from Engagement Sessions and Surveys

Once we aggregated and analyzed the data we collected at the engagement sessions and the survey results, we couldn't wait to dig into the data and learn what you asked for. Here are the key takeaways that have informed this strategic plan:

1. Members want a younger and more diverse CMC.

"THE CMC NEEDS TO FOCUS ON CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT THAT IS WELCOMING AND ENCOURAGING TO ALL PEOPLE OF ALL AGES, RACES, GENDERS (INCLUDING NON-BINARY), AND EXPERIENCE LEVELS - AND WORK TO MAKE HIKING AND CLIMBING ACCESSIBLE, SAFE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FLOOD OF NEWCOMERS TO THE STATE." - ANDREW, DENVER

2. Members love and value CMC's education and trip offerings—and want more of them in the future.

"I CAME ON A TRIP AS A GUEST AND A CMC LEADER SAVED MY TOES FROM FROSTBITE. IT MADE ME REALIZE THE VALUE OF BEING EDUCATED IN COLORADO'S MOUNTAINS." - MARY, ASPEN/ROARING FORK

3. We need to recruit more trip leaders. Demand for trips far exceeds the supply of trip leaders. We also need to ensure a high bar for trip leaders—while simultaneously reducing barriers to members becoming trip leaders.

4. Members value local groups—and those local groups want and need more support and communication from the state office. However, it is equally as important to them that local groups maintain their autonomy and local culture, and that the state office celebrates those unique qualities in each group.

"I FEEL ENCOURAGED THAT STATE STAFF IS WILLING TO COME OUT AND HEAR FROM GROUPS AND DETERMINE HOW THE CLUB SHOULD LOOK IN 5 YEARS." - GORDAN, FORT COLLINS

5. Members and non-members are looking for ways to connect with other people that share the same activity interests. A major reason people attend CMC events is to meet new outdoor partners and learn new skills.



THE STRATEGIC PLAN

LIFE IS BETTER AT 14,000'

THE FUTURE OF
MOUNTAIN ADVENTURE AND
EDUCATION IN COLORADO



ADVENTURE & EXPERIENCES

Inspire every Coloradan to explore

EDUCATION

Be Colorado's first choice for outdoor learning

CONSERVATION & STEWARDSHIP

Strengthen and enhance conservation programs across Colorado

COMMUNITY

Expand and enrich Colorado's Mountain Community

LEADERSHIP & REPUTATION

Be recognized as a leader in outdoor education, conservation, and adventure in Colorado and the nation

INSTITUTIONAL STABILITY

Safeguard the next 100 years

 Marisa Jarae



BOLD EXPLORATION OF COLORADO'S RUGGED WILDERNESS



📷 [Top] Val Hawks [Bottom] Brittany Smith



ADVENTURE & EXPERIENCES

We will provide trip opportunities to meet member demand no matter their age, experience, or competency.

- Increase quantity and variety of volunteer-led trips to better meet member demand.
- Increase trip leader support and streamline processes to greatly improve the volunteer experience.
- Be the first choice in guidebooks. Expand CMC guidebooks to become the leading information source for people to explore wild places.



[Top Left] David Boersma [Middle Left] Val Hawks [Bottom Left] Brittany Smith [Bottom Right] CMC Youth Education Staff

OUR MEMBERS LEAD THE WAY IN THE MOUNTAINS



📷 [Top] Val Hawks [Bottom] Brittany Smith



EDUCATION

The CMC will expand our education programming and serve as the premier provider of outdoor education throughout the state.

- ▶ Improve leader collaboration across the Volunteer Network.
- ▶ Improve consistency by implementing standards for schools, courses, and clinics.
- ▶ Modernize our mountain sports categories by adjusting course offerings and rates to meet the demands of today's Coloradans.
- ▶ Inspire Volunteer Leader participation by providing relevant, high-quality training; continuing education; and recognition for volunteer instructors.
- ▶ Enhance the alumni experience by creating a benefit-driven CMC Schools Alumni Association.
- ▶ Welcome students of all levels by eliminating unnecessary barriers to entry for technically proficient new members and students.



[Top Left] CMC Youth Education Staff [Middle Left] CMC [Bottom Left] Val Hawks [Bottom Right] Wilderness Trekking School

WE ARE OUR MOUNTAINS



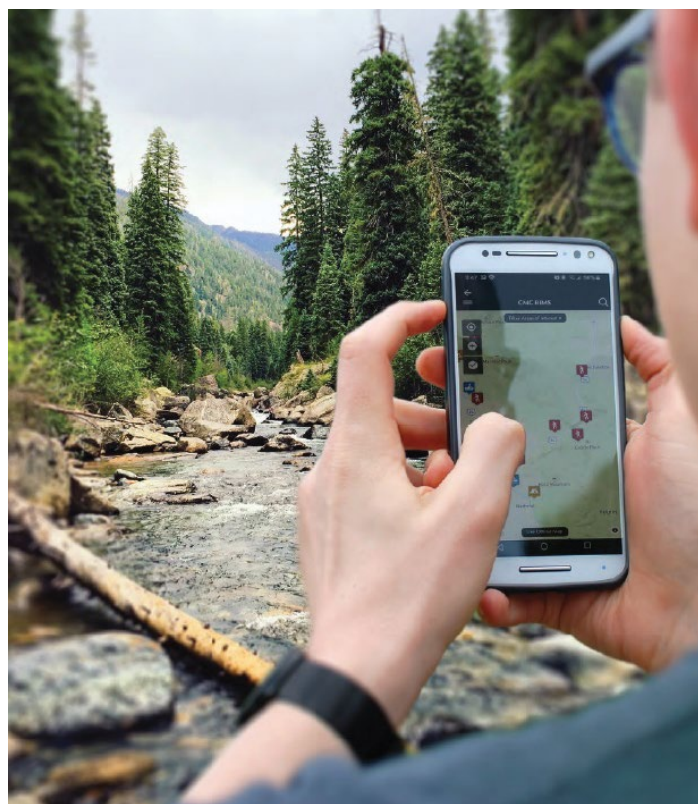
📷 [Top] CMC Stewardship Crew [Bottom] Kahle Toothill



CONSERVATION & STEWARDSHIP

We will build tools, networks, and capacity to help land managers and outdoor enthusiasts mitigate the impacts of recreation on public lands.

- ▶ Activate and lead on essential stewardship projects across the state. We will provide professional stewardship programs to help land managers address priority trail maintenance, construction, restoration, and project management needs.
- ▶ Collect, analyze, and distribute valuable real-time information. We will implement Recreation Impact Monitoring System (RIMS) technology to provide critical trail impact data to land managers and the public.
- ▶ Advance conservation initiatives and advocacy. We will engage thought leaders across the state to enhance conservation and recreation campaigns.
- ▶ Embed a strong conservation ethos across all CMC programs and communications. We will empower CMC members and leaders by devoting resources to conservation events and activities statewide.



[Top Left] CMC [Middle Left] CMC Stewardship Crew [Bottom Left] CMC Conservation [Bottom Right] CMC Conservation

ADVENTURES ARE BETTER TOGETHER



📷 [Top] CMC Member on Women's Hike [Bottom] Brittany Smith



COMMUNITY

We will improve our communications, programming, group collaboration, and value proposition to better meet the demands and desires of active Coloradans.

- ▶ Embrace Colorado's diversity by building a membership that fairly represents Colorado's age, gender, and racial demographics.
- ▶ Inspire participation by increasing and retaining our membership across Colorado with an emphasis on regional communities and activities.
- ▶ Connect communities by facilitating collaboration to provide greater benefits, resources, and engagement opportunities for members statewide.
- ▶ Modernize communications to be relevant for all CMC members.
- ▶ Empower local action by increasing activity-specific sections and programs to better serve our members' interests.



[Photos] *Brittany Smith*

THE MOUNTAIN CLUB THAT GUIDES THE WAY



📷 [Photos] Marisa Jarae



LEADERSHIP & REPUTATION

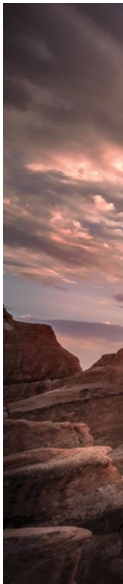
We will improve our branding and awareness through multiple channels: partnerships, advertising, industry events, and public speaking engagements.

- ▶ Enhance the CMC brand by creating and implementing a branding campaign highlighting CMC's leadership and expertise in education, conservation, and adventure.
- ▶ Tell the CMC story by creating and implementing a public relations strategy to measurably increase the awareness of the CMC's mission and programs.
- ▶ Be omnipresent in our communities throughout the state. We will create, train, and deploy a speakers' bureau of board members, instructors, and subject matter experts.
- ▶ Explore new partnerships focused on increasing the awareness of the CMC.

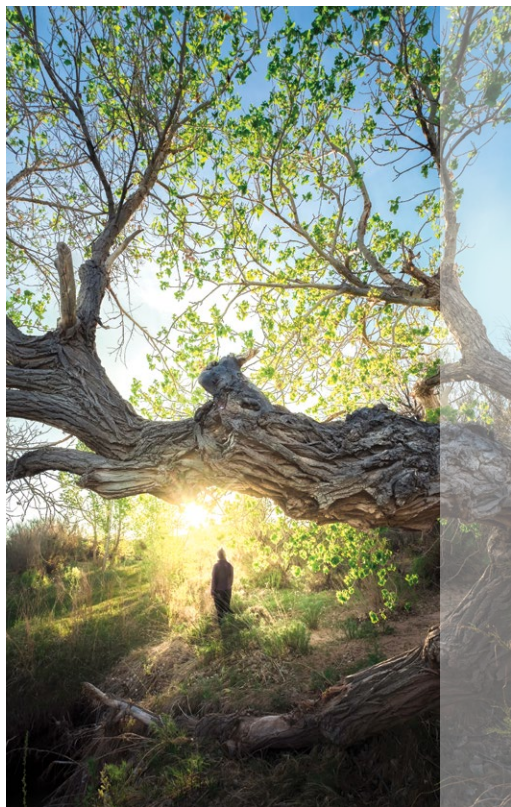




**A CLUB OUR GRANDCHILDREN'S
GRANDCHILDREN CAN ENJOY.**



 [Photos] Marisa Jarae



INSTITUTIONAL STABILITY

Strengthen our resources so we can confidently address challenges and seize opportunities serving our membership for generations to come.

- ▶ Invest in Board and State Council development. We will recruit and invest in high quality governance leadership on the Board & in State Council to guide CMC's mission
- ▶ Establish reserve funds. We will create and increase operating budget surplus annually to build a reserve fund.
- ▶ Align pricing value to the market and the membership. We will ensure membership dues, course fees, and trip tuition meets the market demand.
- ▶ Increase fundraising effectiveness. We will grow event revenue and increase contributions from individuals, foundations, and corporations.





KEY STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

Throughout the year-long process to create this plan, one thing has become very clear – we all have very ambitious goals for the Colorado Mountain Club.

CMC staff and the Strategic Planning Committee are now collaborating to define key performance indicators (KPIs) and develop a timeline to successfully execute this plan. We do see this as a living, breathing document. With guidance from the committee, staff will continually shoot

bearings, box where necessary, and adjust as needed to ensure that we are achieving success while still acting in the spirit of our mission and staying true to our values.

Just as we would in any new adventure in the mountains, the CMC staff intends to approach this new strategic plan as boldly as we would any mountain expedition. With this plan and the committee to guide us, we can boldly say that by 2025, the Colorado Mountain Club will:

ADVENTURE & EXPERIENCES

- **Double the number of annual volunteer-led trips from 1,766 to 3,600**
- Broaden our mountain interest-groups & sections to include other sports, such as mountain biking and trail running to better reflect the needs of Coloradans
- Triple the annual CMC Press net revenue from \$14,000 to \$42,000
- Expand CMC Press into adventure narratives and educational textbooks in addition to guidebooks

EDUCATION

- **Enhance our members' outdoor skills by increasing school enrollment from 2,800 to 3,800 students, annually**
- Double the number of volunteer trip leaders and instructors from 311 to 622
- Grow the percentage of female trip leaders and instructors from 25% to 50%
- Ensure 25% of CMC instructors are UIAA Mountain LEAD (Leadership Education and Development) certified in their disciplines

CONSERVATION & STEWARDSHIP

- **Protect 200,000 acres of public lands in Colorado through new Wilderness and recreation designations**
- Construct/maintain 500 miles of trail by 2025
- Expand data collection through the Recreation Impact Monitoring System (RIMS) mobile app by increasing users from 285 to 5,000

COMMUNITY

- **Grow our membership 15% annually from 7,000 to 14,500 members**
- Advance a more inclusive Club by ensuring that underrepresented communities comprise 10% of our membership
- Launch a new website & database system with modern, top-of-line programs to enhance the member experience

LEADERSHIP & REPUTATION

- Boost Club awareness and customer satisfaction with 90% of all CMC members recommending the Club to friends and family

INSTITUTIONAL STABILITY

- Increase philanthropic contributions and event proceeds by 105% from \$663,500 to \$1,355,500 annually

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It was tremendously important to craft this new strategic plan with our members and for our members and to include the greater outdoor community. We want to acknowledge the 1,000+ people who gave their time, feedback, and shared their passions for the CMC with us in Engagement Sessions, Board Retreats, Town Halls, and multiple surveys. Your time and feedback have been essential. Thank you all!

We also want to acknowledge the extensive time and energy that our Board of Directors put into this process. In particular, we want to thank Kathy Workman for the dedication and expertise that she provided from beginning to end. **To Kathy and the entire Board: thank you for your guidance, support, and insight. This strategic plan is a reflection of your dedication to the Colorado Mountain Club.**

Special thanks to our State Board members, State Council members, and engagement session attendees:

2019 AND 2020 BOARD MEMBERS

Jason Antin	Dan Cummings	Jason Kolaczowski	Maren Olson	Matt Stevens
Mark Armstrong	Jeff Flax	Kathy Kurtz	Scott Otteman	Liz Strahura
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