

VOC teams repair public trails near dinosaur track exhibit

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Volunteers for Outdoors Colorado (VOC) has dispatched teams to construct and repair public land trails, provide wildlife viewing platforms, improve playgrounds and build community gardens across the state for more than 30 years.

Fifty volunteers traveled last weekend on Saturday, October 13, to the Withers Campground and its trailhead access to the U. S. Forest Service's dinosaur track exhibit along the Purgatoire River Valley south of La Junta. Their task was to restore the initial mile

of trail descending from the grass-land campground to a riverside road, which is the main entrance to the dinosaur track site. This connecting trail has deteriorated so badly in recent years as to be increasingly unsafe for hikers.

The primary goal was to construct stairs that should stabilize erosion on the trail by sluicing runoff away from the path itself. Jackie Curry, a VOC intern and project manager, noted that, "This very steep section of trail was like a ladder with many broken rungs. You could still climb out but you risked sliding and twisting your

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Photo by Brad Kirby / The Chronicle-News

Volunteers for Outdoors Colorado (VOC) met on Saturday, Oct. 13 to make much-needed repairs to the main entrance trail to dinosaur track public wildlife site in the Comanche National Grasslands.



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Volunteers for Outdoors Colorado (VOC) met on Saturday, Oct. 13 to make repairs to the main entrance trail to dinosaur track public wildlife site in the Comanche National Grasslands. Above right, carrying 8-foot beams for the steps on the trail are (L-R) in front, Matthew Wallace and Alan Davison and in back John Ward and Mike Mattice. Above left are trail repair volunteers Amanda Karstetter, Terry Gimble (Trail Supervisor) and Erin King and below, Bob Powers, blue shirt, Matthew Wallace and red Alan Davison, red shirts.

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ankle, or worse, on the way down."

Many of the volunteers arrived a day early to enjoy a tour hosted by Lyn Neve of the Forest Service. They visited petroglyphs, an early Spanish settler cemetery, the O'Rourke ranch and were fascinated by a migrating tarantula.

Saturday evening included a lecture by Steve Wooten, president-elect of the Colorado Cattlemen's Association, regarding the challenges of running a large cow/calf operation in arid country during a period of extended drought. Wooten's emphasis on managing his ranch's environmental resource in a sustainable manner surprised

and pleased his largely Front Range audience.

Because of Sunday's impending snow-storm volunteers worked a long day on Saturday to insure all the needed stairs were placed. This represented the bulk of the work they came to complete. An opportunity to visit Colorado's hidden tourist gems brings these volunteers back each summer.

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