

# RESOURCE PROTECTION 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



*As leaders in our field, Boulder County Park Rangers and Deputies play an integral role protecting open space lands and ensuring the safety of park visitors. We engage and educate the public and safeguard the human, natural, and cultural resources of Boulder County. Our work inspires an appreciation of conservation and environmental stewardship for future generations.*

# 2024 RESOURCE PROTECTION TEAM



**Sarah Andrews, 1768**

**Brady Berning, 1707**

**Kelly Boden, 570**

**Bevin Carithers, 1760**

**Tina Currin, 1708**

**Warren DeKoven, 1709**

**Bailey Eddy, 1706**

**Kevin Grady, 1767**

**Erin Hartnett, 1763**

**Jeff Hiebert, 1761**

**Avery Jones, 1705**

**Denny Morris, 1766**

**Dean Myron, 1704**

**Juan Ocampo, 1769**

**John Queen, 1764**

**Matt Sanderson, 525**

**Josh Scrudder, K571**

**Tony Tagliatela, 659**

**Lucero Torres, 1762**

**Sully Tun-Ake, 1770**

**Chris White, 1765**

# 2024 HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Twenty-two park rangers and deputies spent more than 6,500 hours patrolling open space lands and trails on foot, horseback, mountain bike, and e-bike.
- Continued to co-create and facilitate outdoor experiences for families at the San Lazaro Community.
- Participated in 19 community engagement events with marginalized and underrepresented communities.
- Continued to partner with Search and Rescue Dogs of the United States, leading community-wide training events, organizing volunteers, and participating in 43 rescue missions.
- Completed more than 1,600 hours of training. Provided training to department staff, participants at Ranger Excellence School, and the Colorado Open Space Association conference.

22

Rangers &  
Deputies  
on Patrol

19

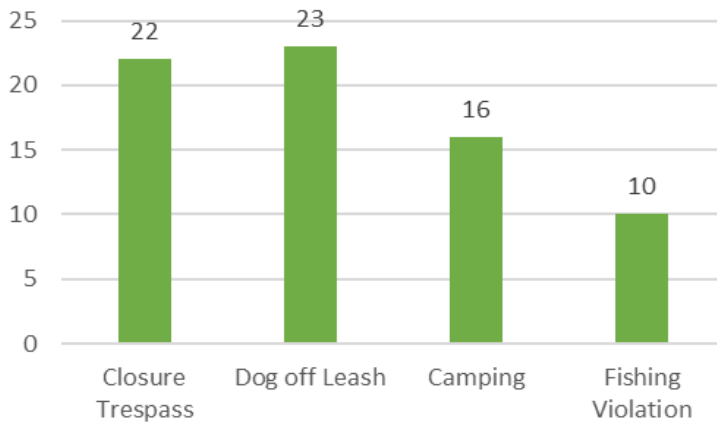
Community  
Engagement  
Events

26

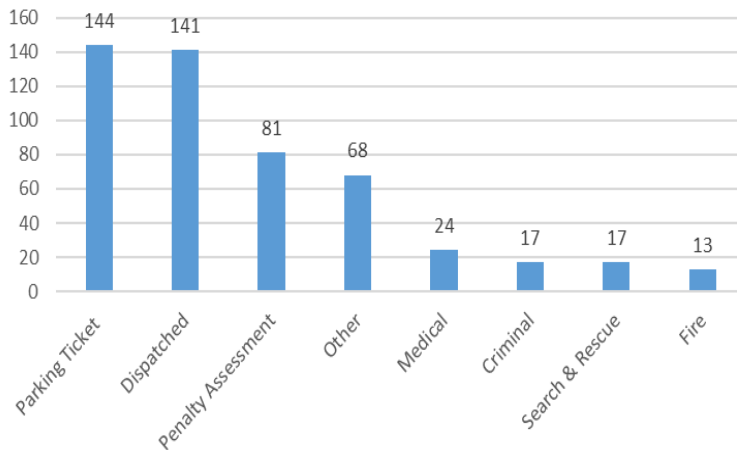
Teens  
Participated  
in LHOC

# Violations and Incidents

## Top 5 Violations



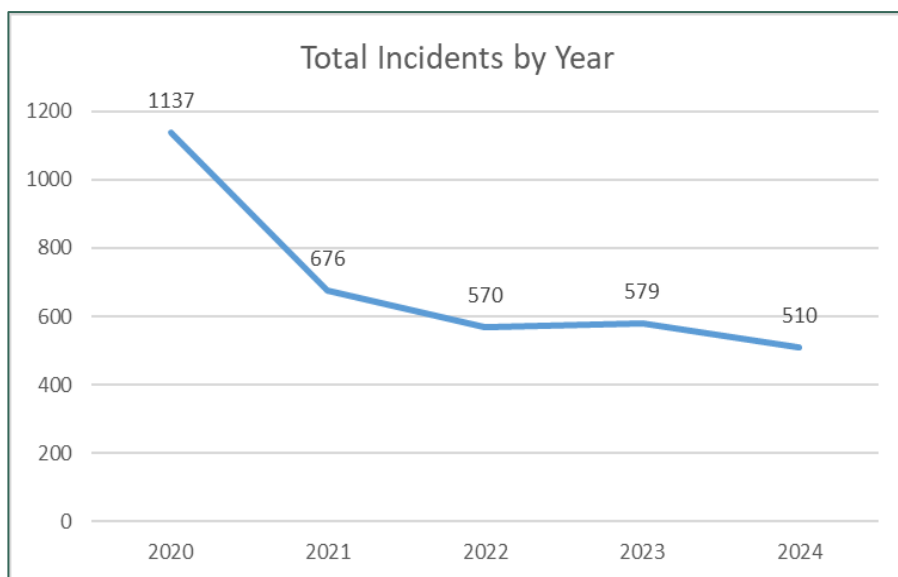
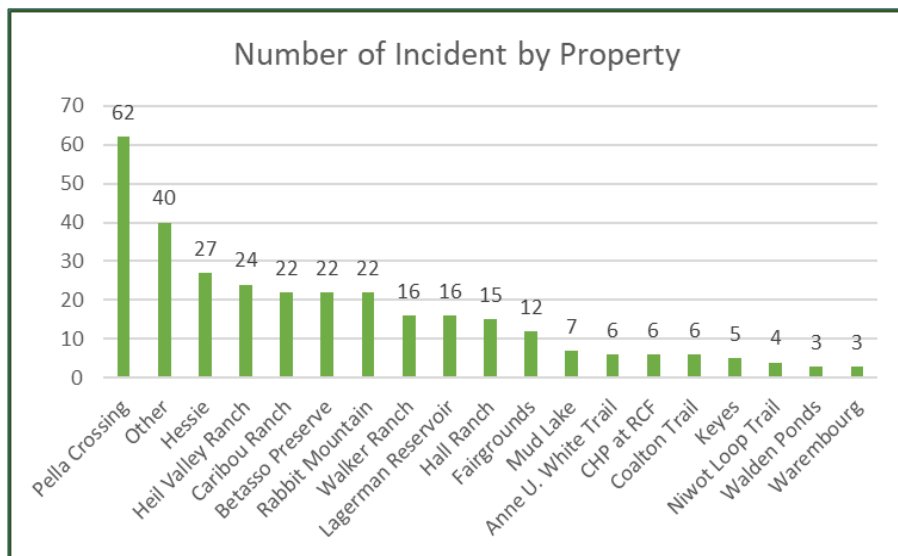
## Number of Incidents by Type



Outside of parking citations, rangers issued the highest number of civil infractions for area closures, typically issued for trails closed because of muddy conditions. Rangers also wrote infractions for off leash dogs and camping. The bottom graph shows the types of incidents rangers responded to. This includes calls for parking violations, calls dispatched by the Boulder County Communications Center, civil infractions, medical incidents, and search and rescue events.

Rangers and park deputies responded to 510 incidents in 2024, including medical emergencies, criminal activities, and general calls for visitor assistance.

As indicated in the graph above, the most incidents occurred at Pella Crossing in Hygiene, followed by "other," which includes locations not listed in the ranger database or managed by Boulder County Parks & Open Space.



## Boulder County Sherrif's Office Patrol Contributions

In 2024, the Boulder County Sherrif's Office was dispatched to more than 735 calls and investigations on Boulder County Parks & Open Space, resulting in about 375 hours of additional patrol on open space lands and trails.

# LEFT HAND OUTDOOR CHALLENGE

In its 13th year, the Left Hand Outdoor Challenge (LHOC) program continues to break down barriers to the outdoors for Boulder County teens. Guided by rangers, volunteer mentors, and community partners, LHOC offers teens ages 14 – 18 develop leadership skills, build lifelong connections, explore careers in natural resources, and leave a positive mark on their community and its open spaces.

LHOC remains committed to promoting connection, diversity, and inclusivity in the outdoors. For the 2024-2025 program, challenge activities were structured with an awareness that different cultures teach us new ways to connect and care for the land and create inclusive outdoor communities. Some of our challenges included Lincoln Hills Cares outdoor activities, Horse Power with Groundwork Ranch, the Youth Outdoor Career Exploration Fair with Youth Exploring Stewardship Coalition, and winter skills with Rocky Mountain Rescue Group. For the first time, we split our teens based on their gender preference, with our young women and nonbinary teens rock climbing with Women's Wilderness and the young men learning mountain biking skills from the rangers.

Our challenge at Lincoln Hills, a historic African American resort, connected teens to nature through archery, shelter building, and history hikes, exploring BIPOC connections to the land. The Horse Power challenge at Groundwork Ranch helped teens develop self-awareness, teamwork, and relationship-building, highlighting how cultural practices like equestrian traditions and experiences foster unique connections to nature and one another.

26

TEENS

8

MENTORS

15

PROGRAMS

12

PARTNERS





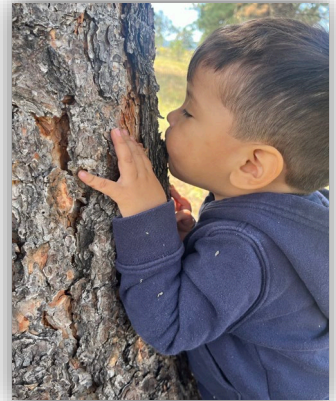
IMAGES FROM THE LEFT HAND  
OUTDOOR CHALLENGE WINTER SKILLS  
DAY AT CARIBOU RANCH

The resource protection team continues to support and lead Cultural Responsiveness and Inclusion Strategic Plan (CRISP) initiatives and community engagement activities. Rangers also serve as frontline Spanish-English translators for law enforcement agencies throughout Boulder County.

In 2024, Las Aventuras de San Lazaro hosted eight programs for the community. These programs ranged from camping at Rocky Mountain National Park to rock climbing at Eldorado Canyon State Park.

Each event had roughly 30-35 participants, except for the third annual Christmas tree harvest, which had a total of 70 participants. San Lazaro served as the hub, but we had participants join us from other mobile home communities in Boulder, Lafayette, and Berthoud. Susana Rodriguez, a San Lazaro community member, has made the program so popular that she has a waitlist of at least ten per event.

Rangers also participated in 19 community engagement programs, including the Boulder and Longmont PRIDE Festivals, Lafayette Youth PRIDE, the Environmental Learning for Kids Career Fair, the Casa family outing to Rabbit Mountain, Latinx Cumbre Juvenil and Corn Festival. They also led programs for WRV/Nature Kids, Casa de la Esperanza's Families United in Nature, Latino Conservation Week at Walker Ranch, and Nature Kids Family Halloween program. These community engagement efforts help build lasting connections between the community and the environment, fostering future stewardship of public lands.



## LAS AVENTURAS DE SAN LAZARO & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



# K9 SEARCH AND RESCUE PROGRAM

Resource Protection's 20-year partnership with the Search and Rescue Dogs of the United States (SARDUS) continued and with a combined 43 missions in 2024. Noteworthy missions conducted by the entire SARDUS team included:

- Finding an elderly woman who went missing from her cabin.
- Locating the body of a man whose car broke down. The driver then wandered away and had a medical incident.
- Watson, the Boulder County Sheriff's Office bloodhound, locating a missing "at risk" teen.
- Finding a teen who went missing in the woods during a campout.
- Locating the body of a missing ATV rider who had been in an accident and wandered away from the scene.
- Assisted in one child abduction case and seven homicide investigations, providing information used to gain probable cause for search warrants.
- Responding to fires in Arizona and searching the aftermath of the floods in New Mexico for recovery operations. Assisting with criminal investigations in Nebraska, North Dakota, and Montana.

Ranger Kevin Grady and his K9 Dottie joined the program under the guidance of Ranger Jeff Hiebert, training in human remains detection and trailing. Deputy Josh Scrudder and his bloodhound Watson passed their certification and worked multiple cases with great success. Jeff, Kevin, Josh, along with their SARDUS canines are backed up by a group of volunteers who reach the highest standards and dedicate themselves to finding missing and lost people.

