

**ACTION BEYOND  
ACKNOWLEDGMENT**  
30X30 MUST UPHOLD TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY

**BEAR LODGE  
NATIONAL MONUMENT**

## **BEAR LODGE**

The State of the Rockies poll demonstrated that there was strong enthusiasm for the current administration's 30x30 policy, which seeks to conserve 30% of land and marine habitat by 2030. The policy supports tribal-led conservation projects and sovereignty. It is significant that 30x30 recognizes sovereignty as tribal involvement in management practices has been treated as a formality, despite the efficacy of indigenous-led land management. At the same time, 30x30 must avoid placing the burden of protecting public lands primarily on indigenous peoples. Highlighting this part of the 30x30 policy is important as recognition of tribal sovereignty could provide greater agency to indigenous groups while reducing the continued harm of settler-colonialism. I represented Devils Tower (using an alternative name) because it has particularly been a site of struggle for the recognition of indigenous land practices and sovereignty, specifically between outdoor recreationists and the nations that regard the site as sacred.

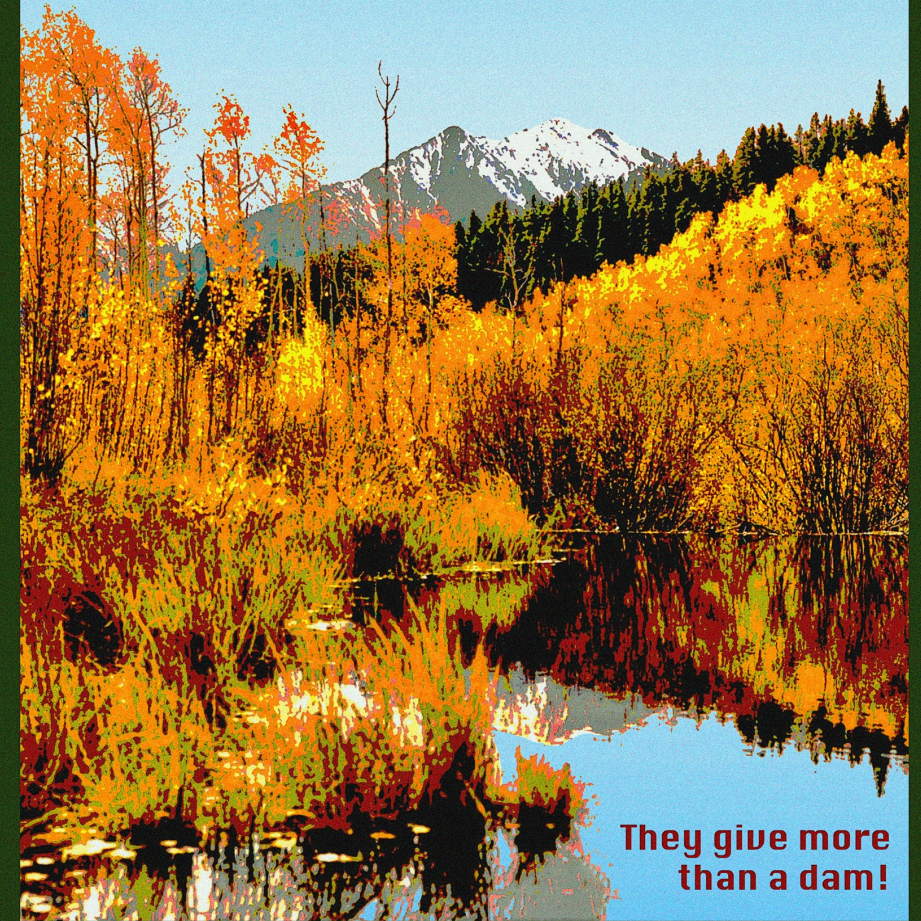
**By Sam Nystrom Costales**

## SAN ISABEL NATIONAL FOREST

In the face of mounting concerns about the environment and climate change, it often feels like the onus is solely on us as humans to restore and protect places like San Isabel National Forest. While it is certainly important to do what we can as stewards of the environment, it isn't always in our best interest to intervene directly in the natural ecosystem. Beavers are one of those cases where human intervention is probably best kept to a minimum. When left to their own devices, beavers play a key role in protecting and preserving the natural environment. Not only do they build dams that restore groundwater, reduce erosion, and promote the growth of riparian plants, but their activity also encourages the regeneration of trees, and provides a natural barrier to wildfires, a growing concern among voters in the West. Sometimes it's best to leave it to the beavers!

By Reed Tafel, '23

**LEAVE IT TO THE BEAVERS.**



**They give more  
than a dam!**

**SAN ISABEL  
NATIONAL FOREST**

## GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK

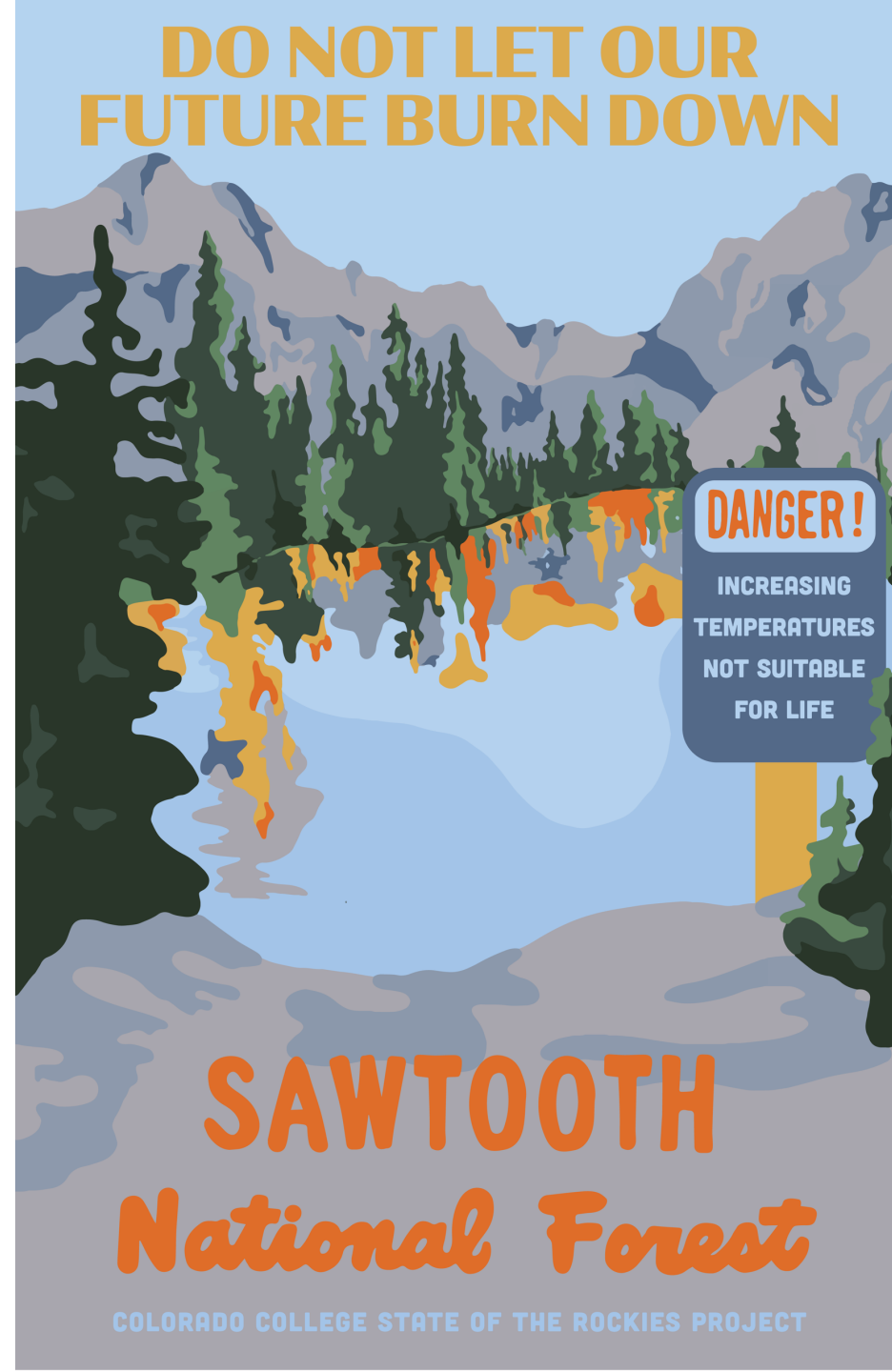
I chose Grand Teton National Park as my subject - it was the location of my first block break and inspired me with its craggy peaks and stunning trails. As I found out, it is also the location of a variety of research and conservation programs that are pushing the climate needle. As respondents of the 2022 poll described, conservation of wild spaces and wildlife are some of the most critical concerns. The Tetons are exemplifying this by putting into place grassland conservation programs to increase the diversity of native species by converting non-used agricultural lands. They've brought in agricultural bison that are managed by the community and contributing to soil health by producing fertilizer and aeration. As the original stewards of the land, Native Americans used grazing patterns and conservation to maintain a mutual balance – something that the National Parks are just starting themselves.

**By Sadie Fleig**



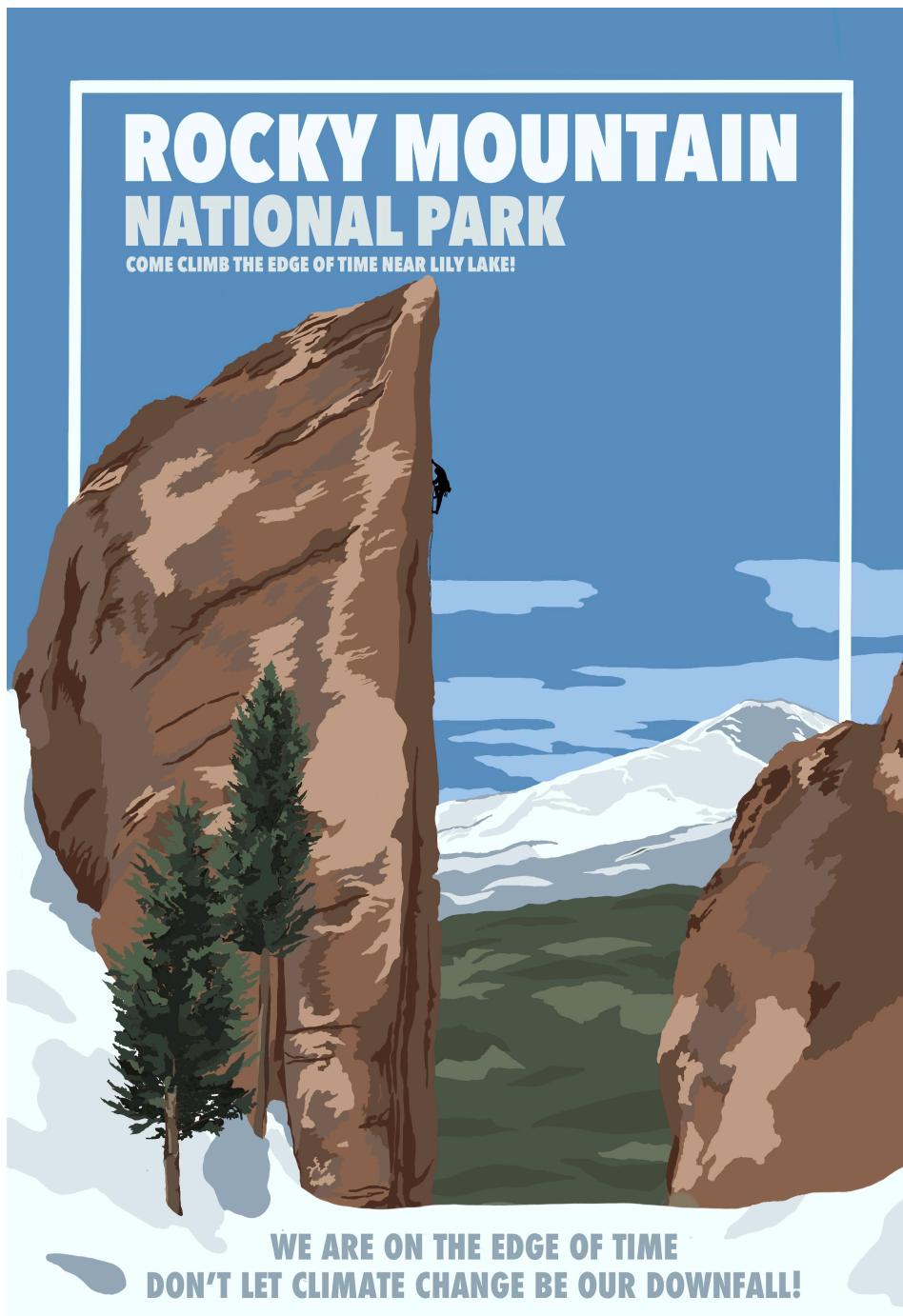
## SAWTOOTH NATIONAL FOREST

I grew up going to Redfish Lake in the Sawtooth National Forest in Idaho where I was first exposed to hiking, camping, canoeing and many other outdoor recreational activities. Due to climate change, which is leading to a greater increase in wildfires, drought and loss of wildlife, recreational activities are at risk for the future. The reflection in the water depicts the burning trees, threatening to burn down our future.



As shown in 2022 Conservation in the West Poll results, 79% of people in Idaho are concerned with more frequent and severe wildfires, while 80% are concerned with droughts. As there are millions of visitors to national parks and forests every year, it is necessary to highlight how severity an issue climate change is. Not only will it affect the wildlife who call this forest home, but also the ability for humans to recreate in the future.

**By Sidney Derzon**



## ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK

Being a Colorado native, nature has always been a big part of my life. Whether it be hiking with my family or climbing adventures with friends, I love being outdoors. For this poster, I chose a climbing area in Rocky Mountain National Park (one of the more famous routes in this climbing area is called the Edge of Time). I wanted to draw a person climbing to show that we can respectfully interact with nature and preserve it for future generations to enjoy. According to the State of the Rockies survey, 75% of voters think climate change is a serious issue and 69% of Colorado voters say that action should be taken. A warming climate will affect the national park's landscape, animals, and plants. We must act now to preserve our parks and our planet!

**By Luana Cooper**

## GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

My first time at Glacier National Park, at ten years old, I was in shock at the fact that I was seeing snow in late August. However, due to rising global temperatures as a result of global climate change, glaciers around the world are melting. Glacial melt can cause a decline of species, increased erosion, and damage to ecosystems. Greenhouse gas emissions caused by fossil fuel extraction are a top contributor to the



warming climate, causing glacial melt across the globe. In order to reduce this damage, it is crucial to reduce the need for fossil fuels and implement renewable forms of energy. The 2023 State of the Rockies survey found that the majority of Westerners see “reducing our need” as the highest priority for meeting America’s energy needs and support their states’ transition away from fossil fuels. We must make this transition now to preserve our glaciers and ecosystems.

**By Lauren Elsea**

## **GREAT SAND DUNES**

My visit to Great Sand Dunes National Park was the first time I had been to a dark sky preserve, and the first time I ever really saw the Milky Way. Inspired by the “Half the Park is After Dark” slogan from the National Park Service, I wanted to recreate the iconic Milky Way posters with a message about light pollution. While the artificial light may seem harmless compared to greenhouse gases or fracking, it has the power to disrupt human and animal rhythms and ruin natural habitats. Additionally, lighting is one of the largest contributors to global energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, and much of it is wasted. With my poster, I hope to convey the beauty of dark skies, and the importance in preserving them from light pollution.

**By Rafi Donohoe**



# DEATH RIDES DROUGHT



## Lake Mead, Nevada

According to the 2022 State of the Rockies poll, Nevadans are concerned about drought and water levels – 95% of all Nevadan interviewees were concerned, and 77% were *very* concerned. Nevadan concerns around inadequate water supplies have also risen 30% since 2011. Lake Mead has been making the news not only for its extremely low levels, which could cause drought, water insecurity, and the shutdown of the Southwest but also for the exposure of humanity's other violent crimes. As Lake Mead dries, skeletons have been found as a result of suspected mob hits. This is why I chose it as my subject. Macabre and stark in the effectiveness of the image, these skeletons show us what waits for us if we do not work to conserve Lake Mead and manage water in the Southwest – death. Specifically – the death of vulnerable and minoritized communities, and then everyone else.

**By Delaney Kenyon**



# YELLOWSTONE

*National Park*

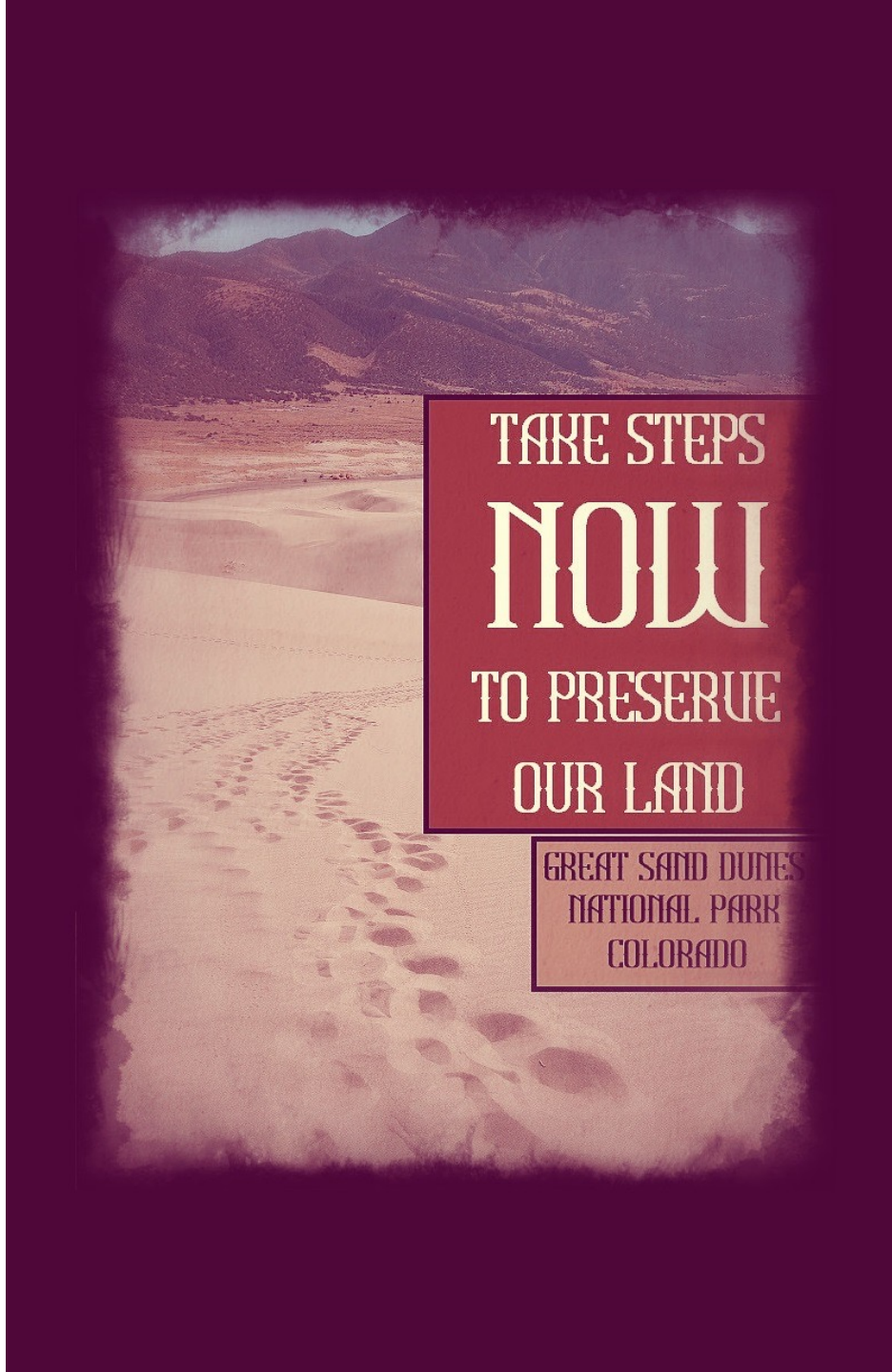
PROTECT OUR  
LANDS THROUGH  
OUR WATERS

"FALL" FOR OUR PARKS  
ACT BEFORE THEY'RE GONE

## YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

Growing up, my family wrote guidebooks for many of the western National Parks. Exploring these Parks was a foundational experience for me and through the work of the State of the Rockies I can tell many other people feel the same. 86% of western voters take issues such as clean water and public lands into account when voting, and another 86% are concerned about drought. I wanted to reflect this by choosing a view of Yellowstone Falls. The Falls represent the water that flows through the west, bringing life to the surrounding land. What makes this view unique is that apart from representing our waters and National Parks, it is visible from just beside the road. Everyone can admire the beauty of Yellowstone Falls, regardless of their outdoor skill. The Rockies are for everyone, and everyone can play a part in making sure they remain for those who follow.

**By Kaden McAllister**



## **GREAT SAND DUNES NATIONAL PARK**

I chose the Great Sand Dunes National Park in Colorado as my poster's location. My trip to the Sand Dunes was one of my first national park excursions during my time at Colorado College. Coming to Colorado for college helped me realize how important preserving natural lands can be, especially as I come from a place where much of the land is already developed and cannot be used for such preservation, unlike the current situation in the Rocky Mountain West.

I used the concept of “preserving our present to sustain our future” as my poster's motto: “Take steps now to preserve our land”. The steps, both featured in the motto and the poster, represent our responsibility to take care of our natural resources so that we may have them in the future as we do now.

**By Hunter Markowich**

## COLORADO NATIONAL MONUMENT

Colorado National Monument is in my opinion a relatively unknown natural space in Colorado – despite it being named after the state. In recent years, there has been a continuous push to designate the monument as a national park, which would offer further protections on the land, its resources, and the life it harbors. I chose to create this poster because Colorado National Monument's future could be at stake. It borders the ever-expanding Grand Junction region and is kept from being designated as a national park due to oil-and-gas proponents. Thus, I believe it is not only essential to continue to protect and respect this space, but also to expand its protections – whether those be physical or ideological. These protections tie into the views that many people who inhabit the Rocky Mountain Region have regarding public land, and thus it is important to continue to push for expanded natural protections.

By Ollie Beland



# PROTECT OUR PIKAS



**ROCKY MOUNTAIN**  
NATIONAL PARK

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK

If you've been above tree line in the Rocky Mountains you know the sound of a pika, hidden from view. Once I hear their squeak the chase is on. I scour the rocks, trying to locate the little grey-brown fluff – it's like the best game of hide and seek. So many Colorado citizens are concerned about the effects of climate change, and rightfully so. Rising temperatures in the mountains won't only change how snow and water collect, but high alpine organisms - like pika's – wellbeing. Pikas have very little heat tolerance, as do their primary source of food, high alpine plants. If we don't start to reverse the effects of climate change, these fluffy balls of joy, and their whole habitat, will be gone very soon.

**By Sofie Miller**

Keep our PARKS  
in PEAK Condition!

Traffic harms the wildlife and environment. Take a bike!

*Leave no  
trace also means  
no more over  
development!*

PIKE NATIONAL FOREST  
**PIKES PEAK**  
COLORADO

## PIKE NATIONAL FOREST

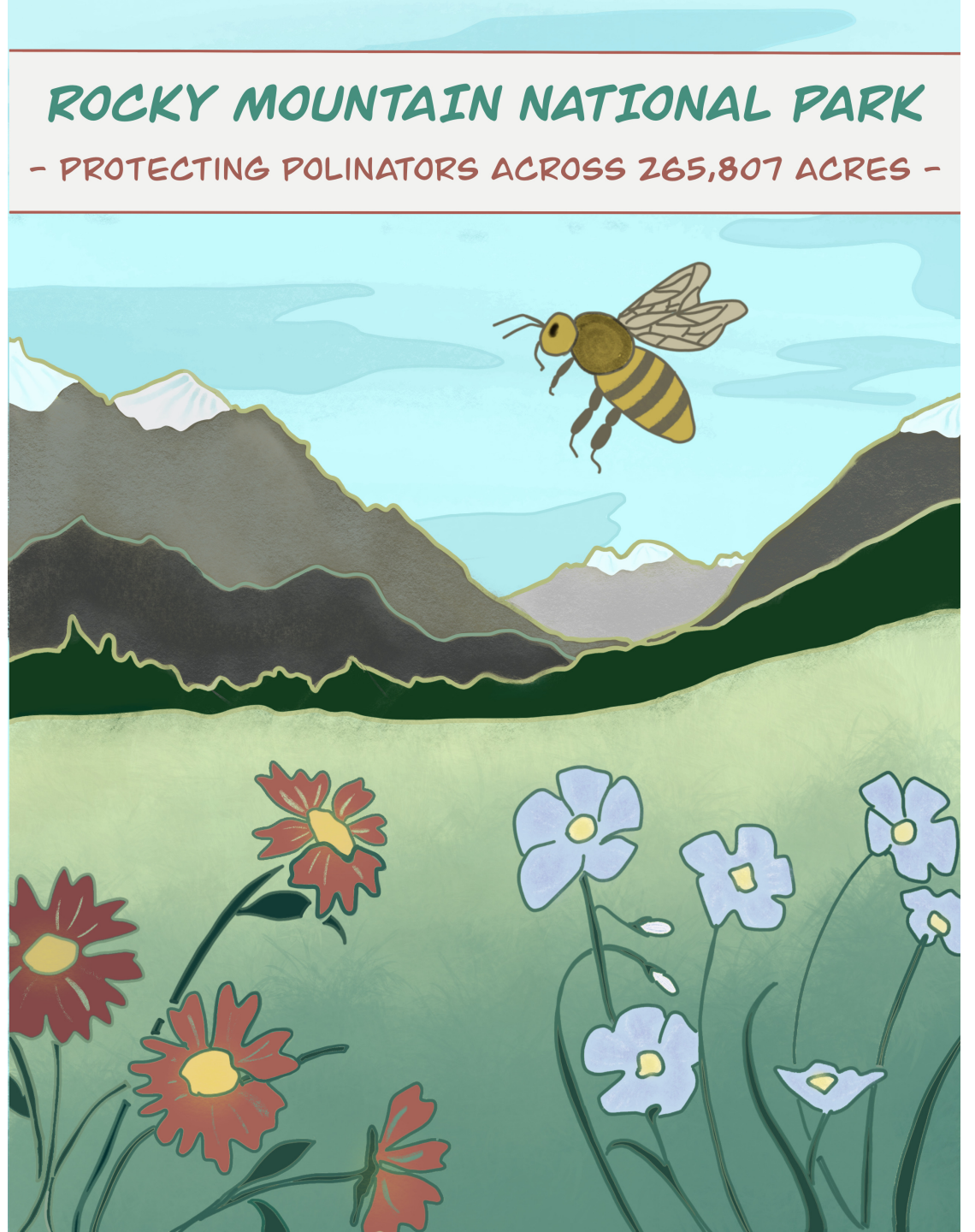
I focused on Pikes Peak with Garden of the Gods in the foreground for my poster. Since I came to Colorado College, I have spent many weekends exploring Colorado's vast wilderness, but often rely on these two nearby spaces to unwind and go on a run or bike ride. As a gateway into the Pike National Forest, Garden of the Gods has much to offer, but its easy access comes with increased vulnerability. Car traffic and litter have only increased these past years since 2020. At least three-in-five people in every Rocky Mountain state support preserving public lands and national monuments, and my goal for this poster is to get this point across while still inviting people to visit these amazing locations. Our natural spaces should be accessible to people, not cars.

**By Sebastian Olson**

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK

Pollinators are of the utmost importance for the health of our communities and environment. Every third bite of food we take was pollinated by an animal pollinator, such as bumblebees. However, bumblebee populations are in decline. Factors including climate change, drought, and neonicotinoid pesticides are stressing bees and as a result, their population in Colorado has decreased by 72% since 1998. While this number is startlingly high, there are conservation efforts that give hope for halting the decline. One of the most important efforts is National Parks, which provide habitat for bees free of neonicotinoids. Rocky Mountain National Park has a variety of flowering plants, two of which are the blanket flower and blue flax. One early summer I saw an abundance of bumblebees feeding on these flowers. Since then, I've thought of Rocky Mountain National Park as a protector for pollinators which inspired the moto and flower design of my poster submission.

**By Amelia McDonald**



# PROTECT OUR SACRED AND PUBLIC LANDS



## GREAT SAND DUNES

NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE • COLORADO  
COLORADO COLLEGE STATE OF THE ROCKIES PROJECT

## GREAT SAND DUNES NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE

I created this poster of the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve in Colorado with the motto “Preserve Our Public and Sacred Lands.” According to Conservation in the West polls’, protecting public lands and limiting oil and gas drilling is highly supported by Coloradans. This is especially relevant in the San Luis Valley, where the dunes are located. The area has long been threatened by oil and gas drilling exploration, ultimately leading to it becoming a national monument in 1932 and a national park and preserve in 2004. This land is also sacred to many people, including many indigenous tribes who have inhabited the area for thousands of years. For the Navajo people, Blanca Peak, located just south of the dunes, is one of four sacred mountains. I hope this poster will inspire appreciation for the importance and beauty of public land and encourage conservation of these sacred places.

By Sophie Dua

## GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK

Grand Teton National Park has captivated the artist in me, from the jagged, snow-capped peaks to the brilliant colors of the flowers, animals, and water. Stuck inside during COVID-19, I had ample time, so I painted. However, my inspiration eventually ran dry, leading me to virtual exploration of the national parks. When I landed in the Grand Teton mountain range, I felt like I was at home in the mountains. However, I noticed that despite the amount of land being preserved, trees in the Grand Teton are dying due to mountain pine beetle infestations. Trees are the best solution for combating climate change, yet it isn't recognized. Even though 66% of people polled support the transition to renewable sources, trees aren't recognized as part of the fight against climate change. Thus, the slogan "Trees! The Greenest Solution" highlights the importance of trees, both in ecosystems and in our future.

**By Sam Daley**



**TREES! THE GREENEST SOLUTION  
GRAND TETON  
NATIONAL PARK**





## **COLORADO RIVER**

The Colorado River is shrinking and the discussion around how to divide the river's water is current and frightening. I took inspiration for this poster not only from the polls demonstrating increasing concern for water preservation and increased water conservation support, but also from the poll that stated that 86% of respondents support creating new national parks, national monuments, national wildlife refuges, and tribal protected areas. If Coloradans want to see more natural resources and spaces protected as national parks, then I think it is important to make a poster drawing attention to something that is not currently a national park and needs protection. Reducing water levels is often associated with an increase in concentration of pollutants and nutrients which can bring on algae blooms and eventually hypoxia. I wanted to reflect that danger in my color choice where, although it is clearly stylized, the river feels overgrown and unclean.

**By Casey Millhone**

# CANYONLANDS

National Park Est. 1964

**Water is powerful**

**It made this Arch.**

**Treat it with the Respect.**

**Before it is to late.**

Colorado College State of the Rockies

## CANYONLANDS NATIONAL PARK

I chose Mesa Arch in Canyonlands National Park for my poster because it is so unique and distinctive. I made the decision to focus on water with my motto because the Colorado River runs through the park and the Conservation of the west poll highlighted the fact that people in Utah are very concerned with droughts. Droughts are caused by a lot of different things such as low rainfall, small snowpack but also by humans using water like there is an unlimited amount. I want to get across that water has done some amazing things such as creating the Mesa Arch and deserves to not be wasted but respected and used thoughtfully.

**By Crosby Williams, '24**

## GRAND CANYON

Growing up in Colorado, I was constantly told that we were in a drought. It was hard for me to understand this issue until the 6<sup>th</sup> grade when I was shocked to learn that the Colorado River could no longer flow to the ocean. The mighty river that had carved the Grand Canyon over millions of years was now trickling out in the Sonoran Desert? Today, as state and federal leaders struggle to reach a consensus on future use of the Colorado River, I relate to the 89% of Westerners who cited inadequate water supply as a serious problem. This poster represents the large spike in concern for drought, low river levels, and water pollution found by the 2022 Conservation in the West Poll. While rafting the Grand Canyon in April, I hope to soak up every moment knowing that I should enjoy it today, while the river still runs.

By Maddi Schink, '23



## ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK

I chose Rocky Mountain National Park because it encapsulates all that the outdoors and conservation are about. Ever since I was a little girl, I have visited RMNP multiple times a summer. It is only one hour from my house and is the most beautiful place I have ever been to. In 2020, RMNP was severely damaged by two wildfires that were the two most damaging wildfires in state history. I care deeply about spreading the message of conservation in the west, and RMNP is the perfect example of a wonderful, magical place that needs our protection. Without preservation, education, and conversation the bold peaks, deep valleys, and rushing rivers of RMNP could easily be destroyed and degraded. And that simply cannot happen.

**By Macy McCauley**

