Waldo Team 2023 Artist in Residence Project:

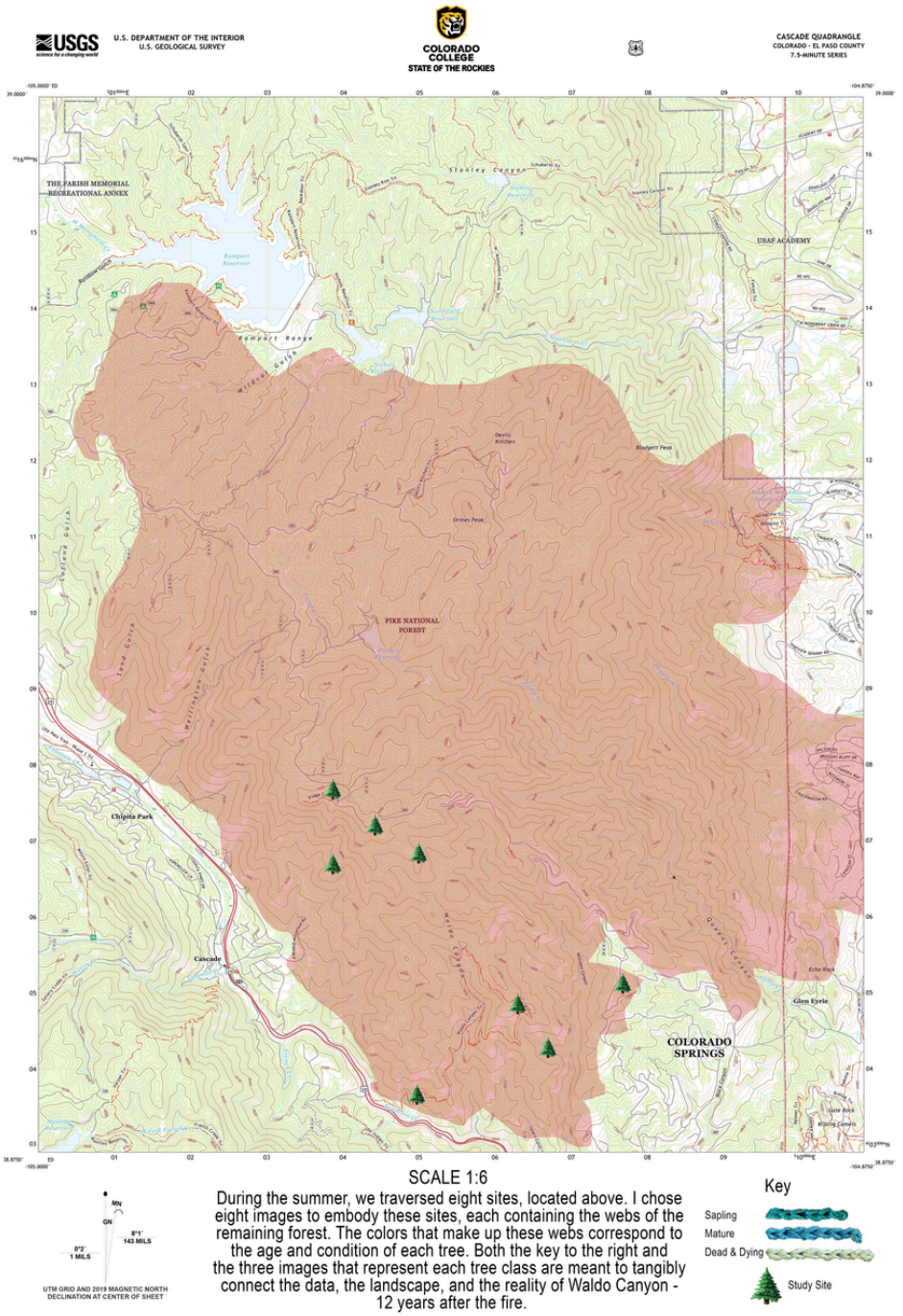
“Pinus ponderosa Webs”

By Ollie Beland

Last summer, I tagged along with the Waldo Canyon Ecological Research Team – taking hundreds of pictures and brainstorming what would ultimately culminate in this exhibit. Throughout this process my goal has been to present the data and importance of the Waldo Canyon study tangibly and accessibly. These “webs” serve as the means to this end.

The background images of each web are of the sites from which the research team collected data – distinct enough to capture the numerous environments we surveyed, yet cohesive to express their shared impact from the Waldo Canyon Fire. The webs on each image are a more direct representation of the collected data. Each web represents the distance and direction to the nearest four living ponderosa pine trees from the center of each quadrant. Data was collected at designated sites, each of which were divided into six square quadrants.

The color of the threads corresponds to the age/class of each tree. Often, there are fewer than six webs present on an image – indicating the absence of living trees ten years after the fire. Science, particularly regarding climate change, needs to be accessible to everyone – and art is arguably one of the most powerful ways for it to be so.
-Ollie Beland



During the summer, we traversed eight sites, located above. I chose eight images to embody these sites, each containing the webs of the remaining forest. The colors that make up these webs correspond to the age and condition of each tree. Both the key to the right and the three images that represent each tree class are meant to tangibly connect the data, the landscape, and the reality of Waldo Canyon - 12 years after the fire.

Ollie ‘25 is a Biochemistry major and is hoping to minor in art studio. He grew up in Little Rock, Arkansas - but has always been drawn towards the Rocky Mountain region. Ollie enjoys integrating art into as many aspects of his life as possible - particularly through photography. It was in Colorado where he first discovered photography, and now almost 10 years later he is ecstatic to use photography this summer as part of the Waldo Canyon Research Project.

Embroidery Work by Ollie Beland