



annual report

BLUFF LAKE IS A 501(c)(3) NONPROFIT CORPORATION

Bluff Lake Nature Center (BLNC) owns and manages a 123 acre urban wildlife refuge and environmental education center. The BLNC mission is to "*foster lifelong learning and environmental stewardship at a unique urban wildlife refuge.*"

BLNC's goals are to:

- Teach natural science to schoolchildren, with a special focus on low-income schools
- Conserve the wildlife refuge for community use, for this generation and those that follow
- Cultivate community members as valuable partners and active stewards

REPORT CONTENTS

Board of Directors
Site Management
Education Program
Volunteer Involvement
Major Donors
Financials
Partnerships
Things to Watch for in 2011



<Kids at Bluff Lake learning about the natural world and defeating nature deficit disorder.

FISCAL YEAR 2010

Dear Bluff Lake Supporters,

In 2010, Bluff Lake Nature Center embarked on an ambitious multi-year project to restore native species to our wetland and riparian corridor. Through partnerships with the Sand Creek Greenway Partnership, Denver Parks and Recreation, and many volunteer groups, 2010 saw an additional 200 native trees and shrubs planted in Bluff Lake and open space parcels adjacent to Bluff Lake. In 2011, we plan to continue these efforts, creating a legacy for years into the future.

We experienced some changes with the Bluff Lake staff at the end of the year, welcoming Lisa Chickos as our Education Director. Lisa comes to us after years of experience in zoos and nature parks, most recently having served as Education Director at the Alaska Zoo. Lisa will be working to grow our public programs at Bluff Lake, further connecting the Nature Center to our nearby neighbors.

Perhaps our greatest achievement in 2010 was a growth in the number of our individual supporters. We simply cannot do our work without the financial and volunteer support of the greater community. We look forward to an exciting 2011, bringing additional summer camp opportunities, restoration work, and public programs to the Denver community.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Best regards,

Glenn Fee
Executive Director



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Peter Smith

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Steele Street Bank and Trust

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Board Vice President
Quiznos

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Independent Consultant/ Educator

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Billy Brown

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Edson Ecosystems, LLC

Christopher Jensen

Isaacson Rosenbaum P.C.

Mariana Ledezma-Amorosi

Colorado School of Public Health

Matthew Schultz

The Schultz Group, Inc.

Beth Wampler

Independent Marketing Consultant



<Volunteers helped plant 200 native trees and shrubs at Bluff Lake during 2010.

SITE MANAGEMENT

In 2010, Bluff Lake engaged in a number of restoration efforts intended to accelerate the native restoration of our short grass prairie, wetland, and riparian corridor. In the spring, the Denver Fire Department's Wildland Firefighting team conducted a controlled burn on our prairie, intended to burn invasive species and remove a deep seed bank of invasives. The Colorado Department of Agriculture provided a grant to Bluff Lake to conduct our most comprehensive spraying of invasive species in years. In our wetland and along the riparian corridor, we completed the removal of invasive Russian Olive trees, while planting nearly 200 native cottonwood, box elder, and peachleaf willow species. Our long term efforts are focused on increasing the diversity of native species in Bluff Lake and working with our neighbors to create a more viable wildlife corridor along Sand Creek.

EDUCATION PROGRAM

During 2010, BLNC continued to provide quality education programs at our urban wildlife refuge and at local schools. A total of 6,449 people, from the following counties, participated in our Education Program during 2010:

- Adams County—1,204 people
- Arapahoe County—742 people
- Denver City/County—4,182 people
- Other Counties—321 people

Science Education and Service-Learning: One of BLNC's highest priorities is providing science education programs for elementary schools in the area, with a focus on low-income schools from the closest urban school districts - Denver, Aurora, and Adams County public schools. Our elementary science program teaches children both in the classroom and at the site, and helps them establish a hands-on connection with nature as an enhancement to classroom learning. Our program supports state standards, and helps teachers meet their learning goals for students. We target low-income schools

(continued on page 3)

by providing free busing and early registration. An internship program with the Denver School of Science and Technology hosted three students for semester-long restoration internships. A total of 4,200 students and adults participated.

Public Programs: Throughout each year, BLNC hosts many types of programs for the public and 2010 public programs included: an *Earth Day Recycling Event*, an in-school *Earth Day Recycling Contest*, six *Fireside Chats*, eleven *Bird Walks*, four week-long *Junior Naturalist Summer Camps*, several festivals and fairs, and two special events. These programs were attended by 2,249 people.

Staff Change: Having accomplished much with her leadership of the Education Program in six years, *Susan Beckett* bid BLNC farewell and started a job at University of Colorado in Boulder. Late in the year, BLNC welcomed *Lisa Chickos* as the new Education Director. She has worked at water parks and zoos, has experience with developing earned-income programs, and is adept at managing volunteers. Lisa is a wonderful new asset for BLNC.

VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

During 2010, nearly 900 volunteers collectively donated 5,456 hours to BLNC's conservation efforts and environmental education programs. This extraordinary amount of volunteer involvement has a value of more than \$117,000.

- **Site Management:** 4,009 hours volunteered by 860 people
- **Education Programs:** 1,141 hours volunteered by 15 people
- **Board, Committees, Other:** 306 hours volunteered by 25 people

BLNC has many hard working and dedicated volunteers. This year picked **Mary Jo Hansen** out of the crowd to receive our *Dirty Hands Award*. — During the school year, Mary Jo dedicates at least one morning per week to educating elementary students on field trips, she has nominated BLNC for successful REI grants two years in a row, and she is the first to raise her hand when we need extra help. She is one of those amazing personalities that brightens any room (or

(continued on page 6)

WHAT SCHOOLS SAY

"We had a great time! My students from last year still remember the filtering cattails."
Altura Elementary School

"Our kids enjoyed this field trip so much that it's all they've talked about since we got back last week. Thank you so much."
Kemp Elementary School

"This was a great way for students to finish our unit on 'Water as a Resource.' I plan to come again next year."
Cole Arts and Science Academy

"Great job—all instructors were great with the kids and did a wonderful job communicating the lesson. Fantastic—very impressive!"
Wheeling Elementary School

"We love this educational adventure!!"
Carson Elementary School

BLNC VISITORS

Bluff Lake is open to and free for the public every day from sunrise to sunset. An estimated 25,000 people visit the site throughout the year for running, hiking, photography, family walks, and exploring.



annual report

FY2010 ~ Page 4

2010 MAJOR DONORS

Citizens of the Scientific and
Cultural Facilities District

REI

Xcel Energy Foundation

Denver Post Charities & Denver
Active 20-30 Children's Foundation

Carolyn W. and Charles T. Beard
Family Foundation

James J. and Joan A. Gardner Family
Foundation

Mile High Million

Waste Management

Colorado Garden Show

Venoco

Prologis

FirstBank of Denver

Forest City Stapleton

Pulling 4 Colorado

North Face

Aveda

Isaacson Rosenbaum

Stapleton Foundation

Stapleton Front Porch

Town Center Dentistry &
Orthodontics

Trask Family Foundation



Thanks to all of our supporters...

Conservator

Phyllis and Vance Allen

Sally Allen

Elizabeth Boland

Susie Crane and Gary Prado

Fran and Carol Haas

Lara Jakubowski

Barry and Donna Levene

Eddie Miller

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Craig Sommers

Katie and Carsten Sorensen

Jason Smirnow

Richard and Kathy Smith

Jeff Stoddard

Marie Torreano

Catherine Tulley and Lino Gonzales

Joe Woodward

*Levels indicate making or bringing in
donations in the amounts of:*

Conservator: ≥ \$500

Cottonwood: ≥ \$250

Steward: ≥ \$100

Please let us know if we have accidentally misspelled or left out your name.

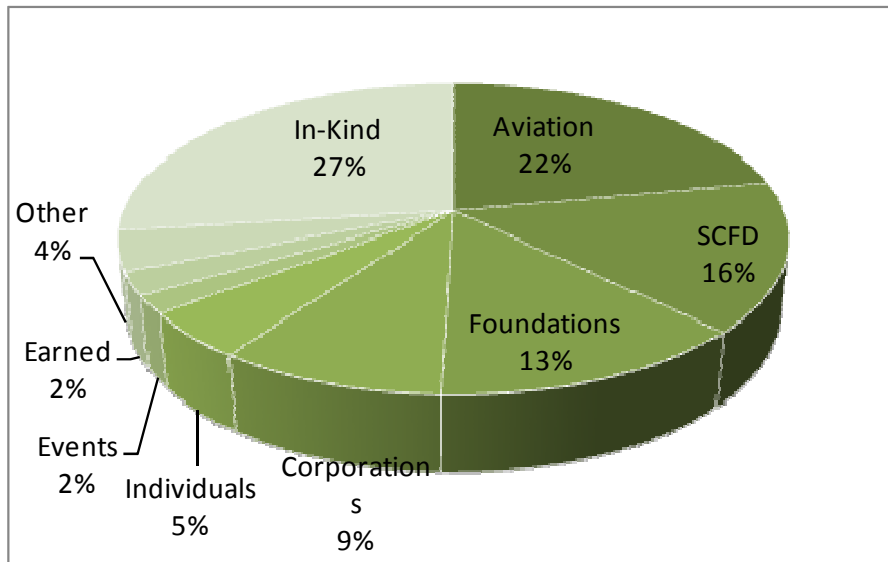
We apologize, and we will correct the error for future printings.

<Many thanks go to the citizens of Denver, Adams and Arapahoe Counties for supporting Bluff Lake via SCFD.

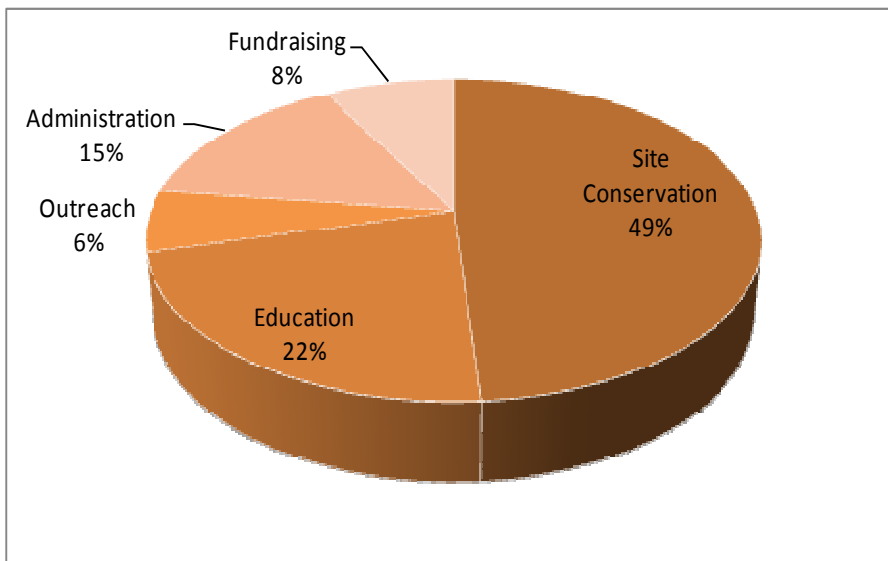
FINANCIALS

FY2010 ~ Page 5

Revenue Total = \$432,942



Expense Total = \$413,989



This information is from BLNC's 2010 Financial Audit. If you would like to see a copy of the entire audit, please contact Mendy Evans at 303-344-1836 or mevans@blufflake.org. If you would like to obtain past IRS Form 990s filed by BLNC, they are available online through GuideStar (<http://www.guidestar.org/>).

BLNC's nonprofit determination number (EIN) is 84-1305302.

GET INVOLVED

Bluff Lake is open, with free access to our trails and open space, every day from sunrise to sunset. BLNC offers a variety of educational opportunities throughout the year. In return, BLNC needs your support. Could you make a donation of money, time or goods?

Become a Member...

A Bluff Lake Membership is an investment in your local wildlife refuge and outdoor classroom. You'll help ensure that there's a wild place practically in your own backyard.

Volunteer...

BLNC has many volunteer opportunities available and you don't have to be a natural resources or wildlife expert to get started. We'll train you to be a Site Steward, Naturalist or Ambassador.

Help with our Wish List...

By donating things that BLNC can use, you can help us save money. A few of our current wish list items include: binoculars for students; sturdy tools and heavy work gloves; and gift cards (Hobby Lobby, Office Depot, Home Depot, etc.).



annual report

FY2010 ~ Page 6

CONTACT INFORMATION

Office & Mailing Address
9801 E. Colfax Ave. STE 100
Aurora, CO 80010

Glenn Fee
Executive Director
303-344-1249
gfee@blufflake.org

Lisa Chickos
Education Director
303-344-1649
lchickos@blufflake.org

Marissa Copan
Community Education Coordinator
AmeriCorps VISTA
303-344-0031
mcopan@blufflake.org

Mendy Evans
Development Director
303-344-1836
mevans@blufflake.org

Chris Story
Site Manager
303-344-1826
cstory@blufflake.org

Keith Wood
Educator
303-344-0031
keith@blufflake.org

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(continued from page 3)

acre) that she enters. Her hard work was highlighted during our **Urban Space, Wild Place** event that was held at Bluff Lake on September 25th.

PARTNERSHIPS

Bluff Lake Nature Center is rare in that we are an urban nonprofit organization that owns a large piece of land. Our location and mission provide strong opportunities to work with community partners on restoration and education efforts. On our restoration projects, we work closely with **Sand Creek Regional Greenway Partnership** (SCRGP) to restore Bluff Lake and assist in creating a more viable wildlife corridor along Sand Creek. Our staff meets regularly with the staff of SCRGP, the **Park Creek Metro District**, **Denver Parks and Recreation** and **Aurora Parks and Open Space** to ensure best management practices along this corridor. **Denver's Mile High Million** tree program, **The Park People**, **Denver Botanic Gardens**, **Wildlands Restoration Volunteers** and the **Colorado Division of Wildlife** provide strong partners in our efforts to restore our habitat to its native state.

Our education programs afford us the opportunity to work with schools primarily in Denver, Aurora, and Commerce City. Our education staff partners with science coordinators and teachers in each district to ensure that our programs meet district science standards. **Science and Cultural Facilities District** (SCFD), **The Denver Foundation**, **Xcel Energy Foundation**, and **Denver Post Charities** are critical in funding our efforts to educate low-income students and to provide creative programs to families.

THINGS TO WATCH FOR IN 2011

monthly Bird Walks ~ Recycling on Earth Day ~ Wine & Cheese on the Bluff in July ~ 8 Fireside Chats ~ 6 weeks of Junior Naturalist Summer Camps ~ volunteer projects to plant more than 300 trees ~ Urban Spaces, Wild Places this fall ~ and much, much more

◀Find out more at www.BluffLakeNatureCenter.org.