



February Newsletter, 2024

Our quarterly community newsletter, highlighting all the wonderful things about Crowley Ranch Reserve.

This quarter,

We flew through the 2023 holidays; celebrating with laughter, friends & family, parties, football & Taylor, travels to faraway lands, skiing, movie nights, hiking, indoor maintenance, cooking, painting, all with not much sun and a smaller amount of snow... And now, we are on the cusp of spring & new beginnings!



A close-up photograph of a person's arms and hands, heavily coated in brown mud. The person is working on a pottery wheel, with their hands shaping a piece of clay. The background is blurred, showing more of the pottery-making process. The image is framed by a dark green border with white polka dots in the corners.

ODE to MUD

“... Ankle deep in laughter and brown, murky water,
Joy spread across our faces,
Mud smeared up our arms, legs, hands and hats...”

Lily Audra, The Ouse Valley

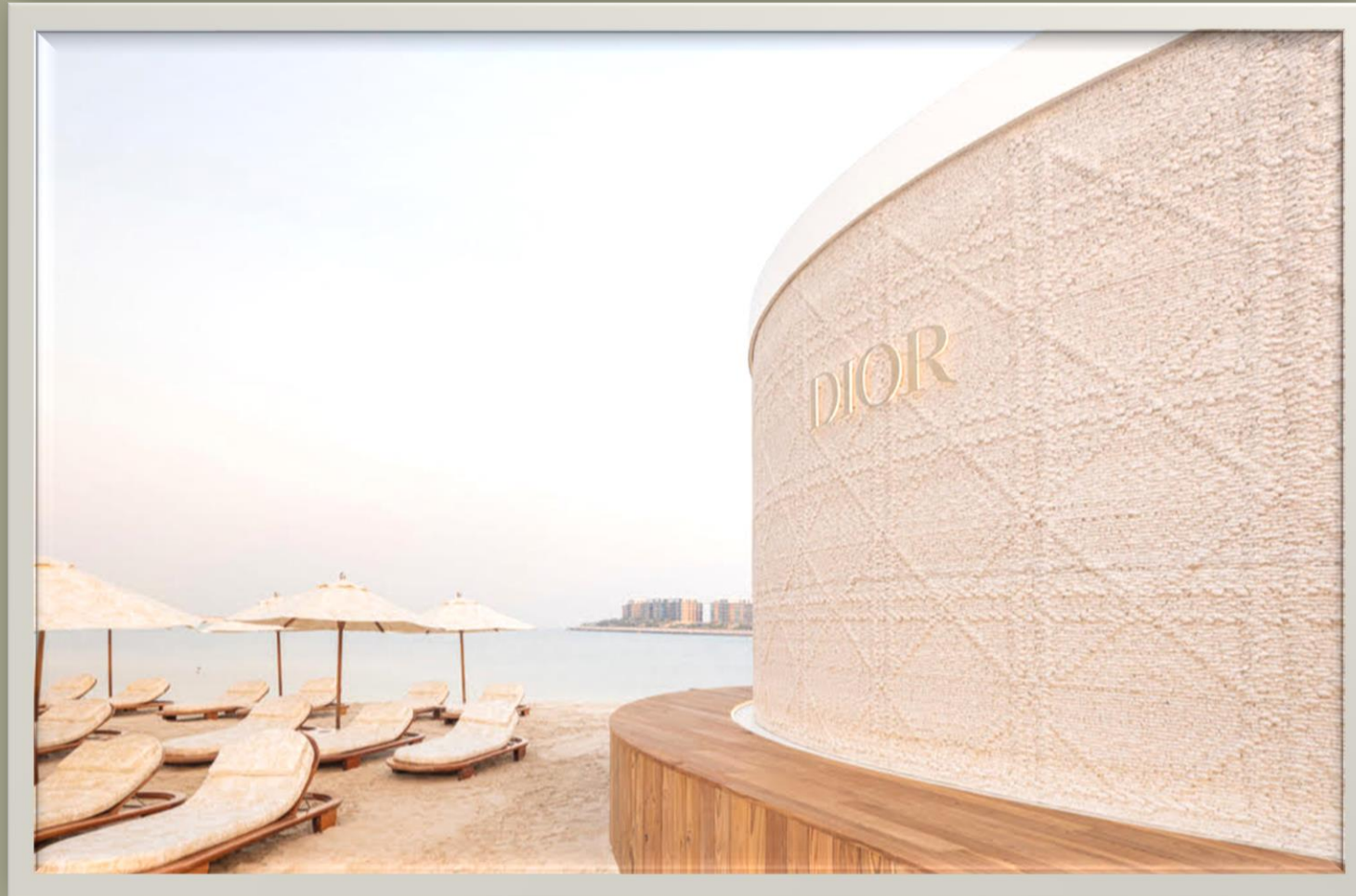
It's begun a little early...

Welcome to **MUD Season** in Colorado, generally it's when the ski resorts start closing, the snow starts melting, and summer activities in Colorado haven't quite picked up yet. It's named for—you guessed it—the mud that forms on hiking trails, unpaved roads, and dirt paths from snowmelt and rain, and typically lasts from mid-April until the end of May. *Only this year, it's already appeared in February!*

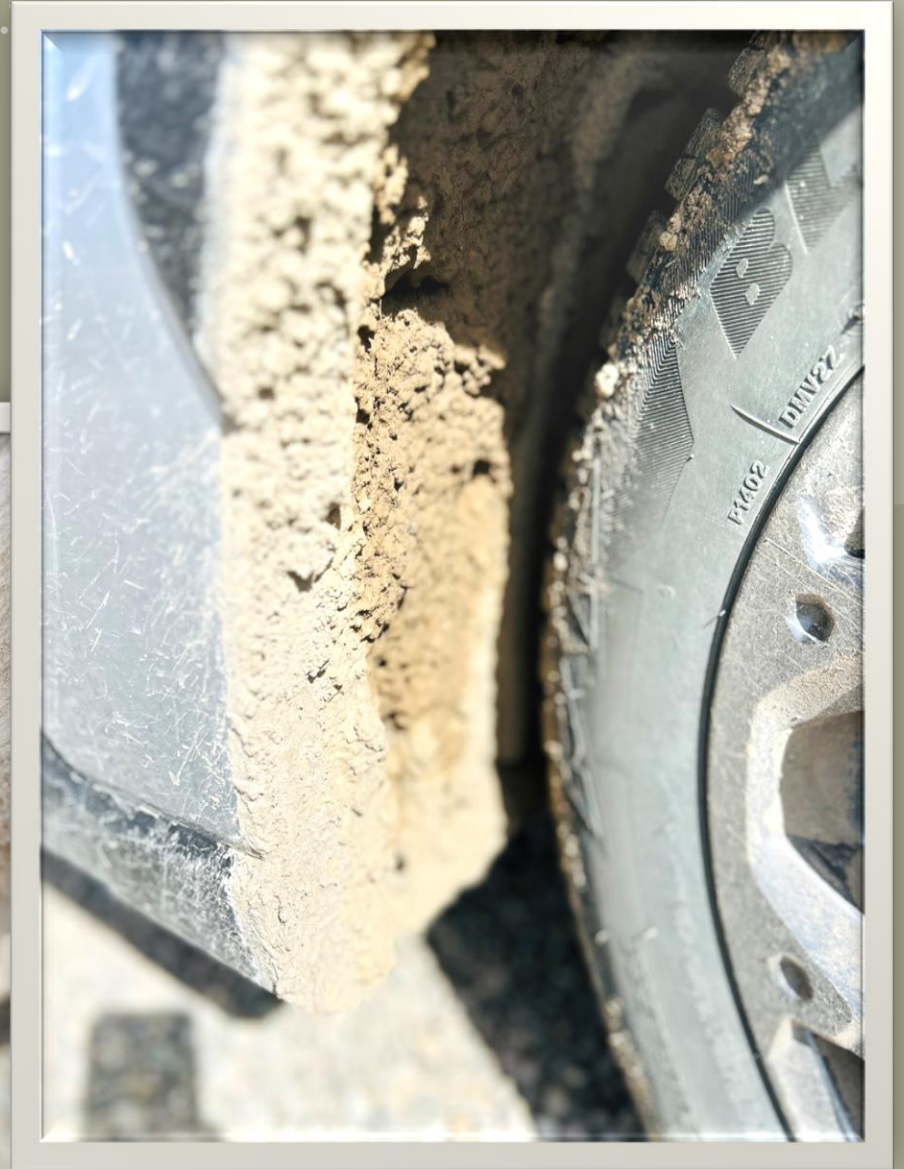
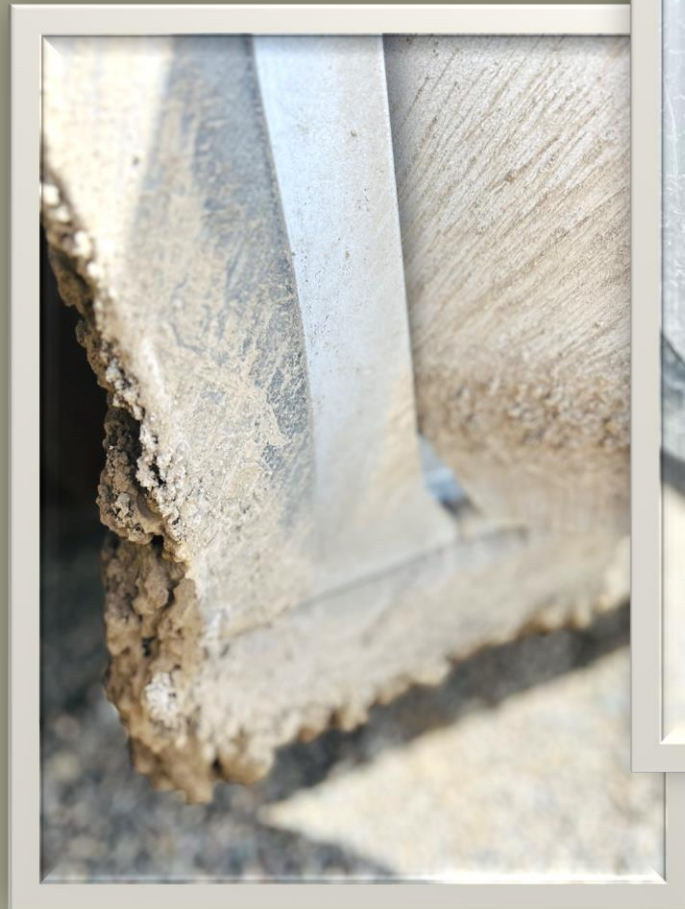
So, we'll continue to scrape, broom, and swab the decks until later this spring.



Buildings are now being made by 3-D printers with MUD as one component. Who says it must be a traditional adobe!

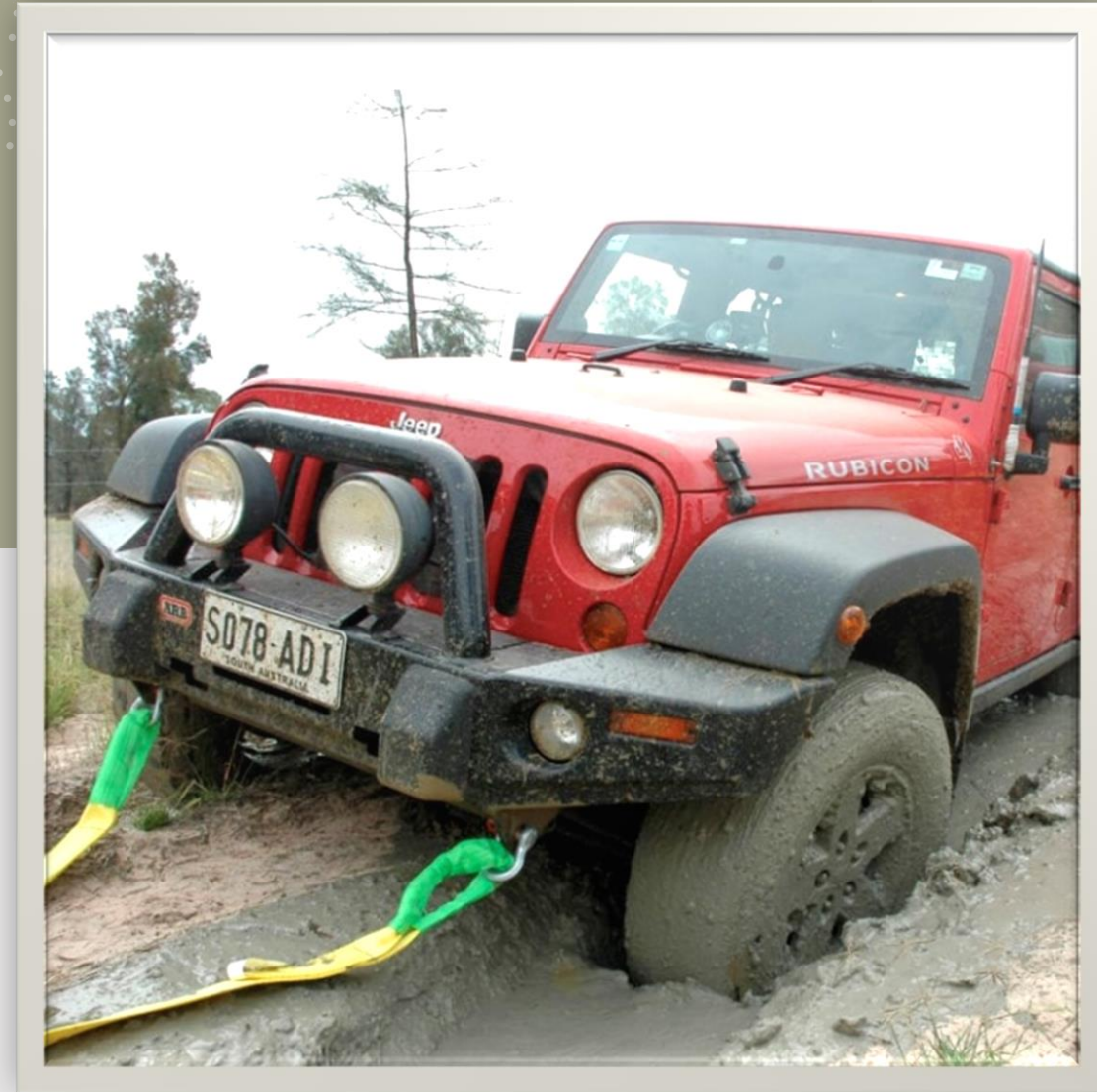


Here's MUD in your eye...



How to Drive So That You Don't Get Stuck

1. **Don't Drive Into Mud If You See These Signs** — tracks that don't return.
2. **Drive Slow, But Keep Moving...**
3. **Avoid the Ruts** - A really, deep rut can cause your vehicle to be high-centered, and you will get stuck.
4. **Plan Ahead** — make sure tires are properly inflated, cell phone has a good charge, and carry a shovel or other equipment to help get unstuck.
5. **How to Get Out Safely If You Get Stuck** - Don't spin the tires... Instead try to rock out by switching between drive and reverse. Add traction. Or jack up the car. Finally, you may just have to call your BFF or a tow truck.



MUD



Sliiiiiideways



Tracking



Cry me a River



Paw Traffic

Tips for Handling MUD Stains on Clothing

- **Don't rub:** If a splatter of mud lands on your clothes, avoid the temptation to wipe it away. Wiping pushes the mud deeper into the fabric. Lift it away with a spoon or the edge of a credit card.
- **Don't skimp on cleaning products:** Tough stains require detergents and stain removers that contain enzymes to break the bond between the stain molecules and the fabric. Cheap detergents are mostly water and won't remove the stains.
- **Tackle super stubborn stains:** Try scrubbing the stain with an old toothbrush after applying liquid laundry detergent or a paste with powdered detergent and a little water.
- **Rinse with rubbing alcohol:** Another trick is rinsing the stain with rubbing alcohol before washing.
- **Handling stubborn stains on white clothes:** Try soaking the item in a chlorine bleach solution (1/4 cup of chlorine bleach with 1 gallon of water) for five minutes, although bleach can sometimes leave a yellow hue. To avoid yellowing, never leave an item soaking longer than five minutes.
- **Double check the item while wet:** Putting a garment with dirt stains into the dryer can permanently set it or bake it into the item.

It's all the same... but not really!

MUD is a soil-like substance made from decomposed matter, while clay is made from minerals.

Dead Sea mud, Volcanic mud, Moor mud, Icelandic silica mud, are all sourced from different locations and offer different benefits for the skin.

Mud and clay are two totally different mediums, so make sure you know what works best for you.





"The MUD has merit.
Mudtime, mudtime, goop on boots.
I grow tall, taller."

Deborah Bowen Joost



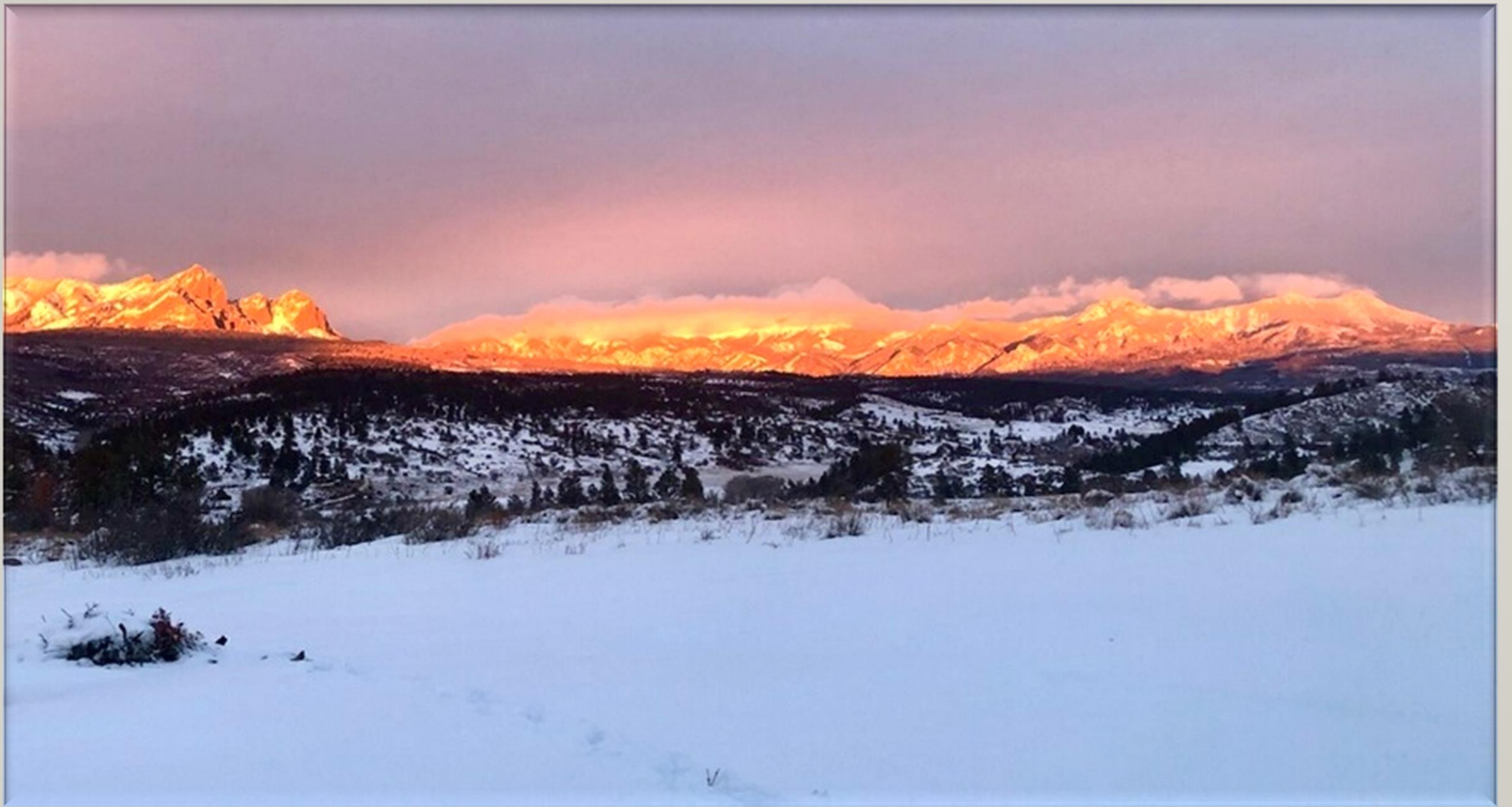
Other Points of View

It's always nice to see a view from a different perspective... How often do you hike across Crowley Ranch Reserve, and slowly breathe in the array of panoramas, other than your own? There are a lot of glorious vistas to see!



Early morning fog







Billowing winter clouds





Afternoon melt




Illuminated skies



Near & far...



A close-up photograph of a person's hands shaping a clay bowl on a pottery wheel. The hands are positioned to guide the clay as it rotates. The background is slightly blurred, showing more pottery and a workshop environment. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green banner at the top and bottom, which contains text and decorative white dots.

Bald Eagles

Each year, from November to March, more than 1,000 bald eagles migrate to the state, joining Colorado's roughly 200 nesting pairs.



Cornell Lab



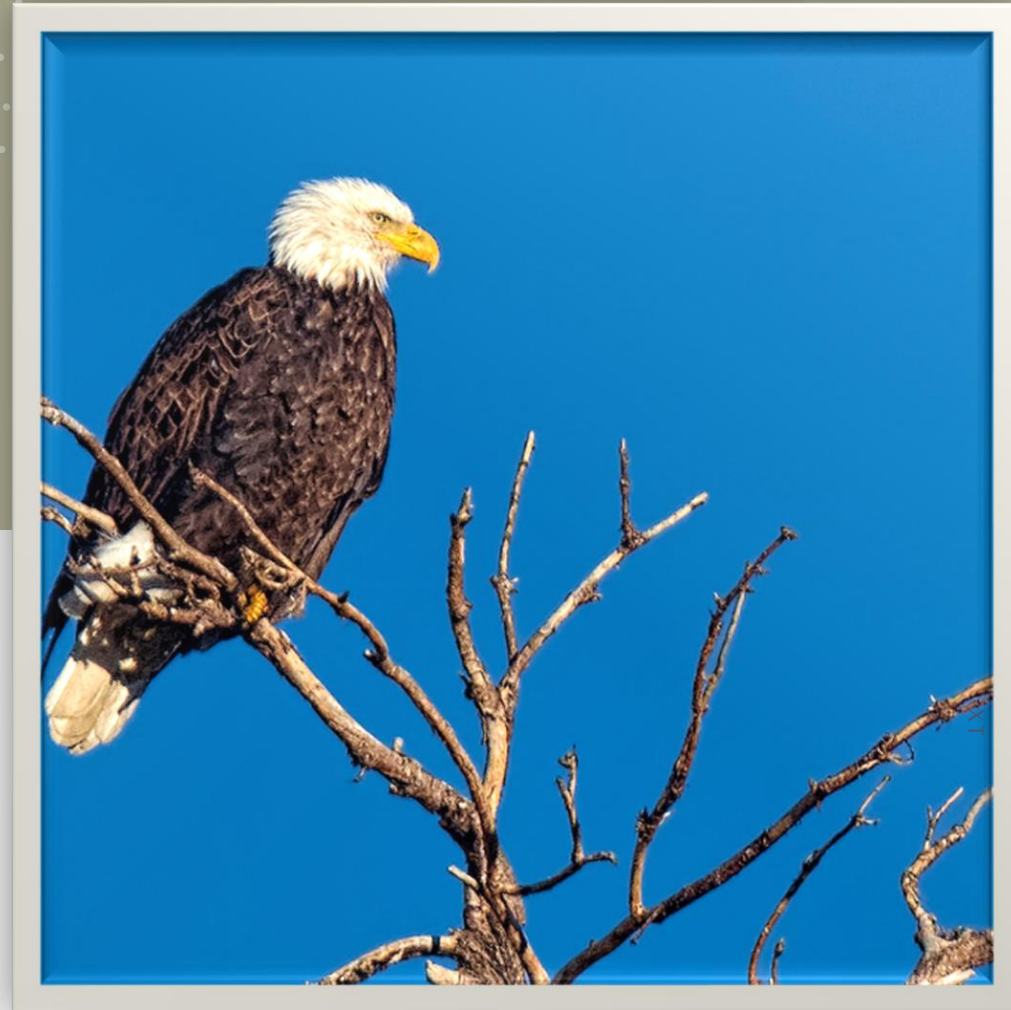
All About Birds

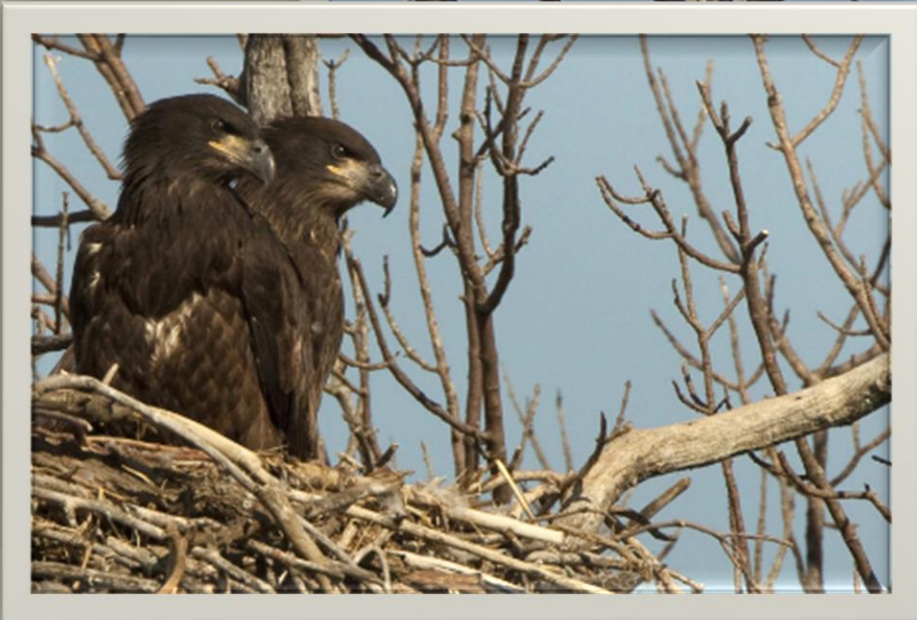
Habitat = In forested areas adjacent to large wetlands (rivers & reservoirs). Bald eagle pairs are observed soaring near Log Canyon & Oso Lakes on Crowley Ranch Reserve.

Food = Bald eagles are opportunistic foragers. They prefer fish, but also consume small mammals & birds, especially during winter. They perch & watch from trees and dead snags along the edge of waterbodies.

Nesting = Eagles reuse their nests year after year, especially if the parents successfully raise young from that nest. The birds will keep adding to the nest every year, cleaning out debris from the previous year, making repairs, and expanding so that very old nests can become enormous, up to nine feet across and 12 feet high!

Behavior = In the winter, bald eagles often gather at communal roosts where they perch overnight and sometimes during the day when the weather is bad. Communal roosts are usually in large living or dead trees that are relatively sheltered from wind and generally near sources of food.





Nests & eaglets...





Add Spark to Your Winter Bird Photography With These Pro Tips

By Ray Hennessy

“Winter can be tough on photographers, with either bright snow or dull browns on offer. But with a bit of planning and some warm layers, you can still capture incredible images.”

1. When bundling up, don't forget your equipment can get cold too.
2. Embrace the white; snow is your friend.
3. When it snows, go shoot photos!
4. Embrace the winter browns.
5. Bring the birds to you with fresh water.”

<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/slideshow-SavSparrow-Hennessy.jpg>



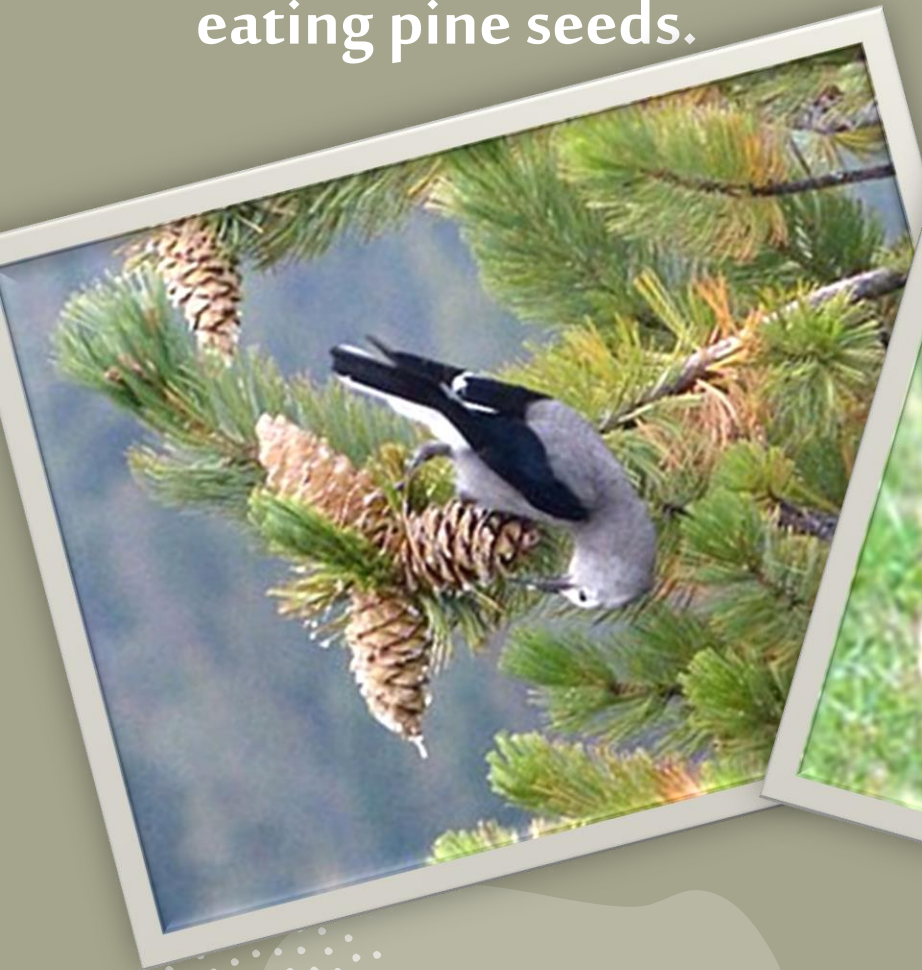
Ponderosa Pines

There are 3.2 million acres of Ponderosa pine ([Pinus ponderosa](#)) forests in Colorado.



Ponderosa benefits...

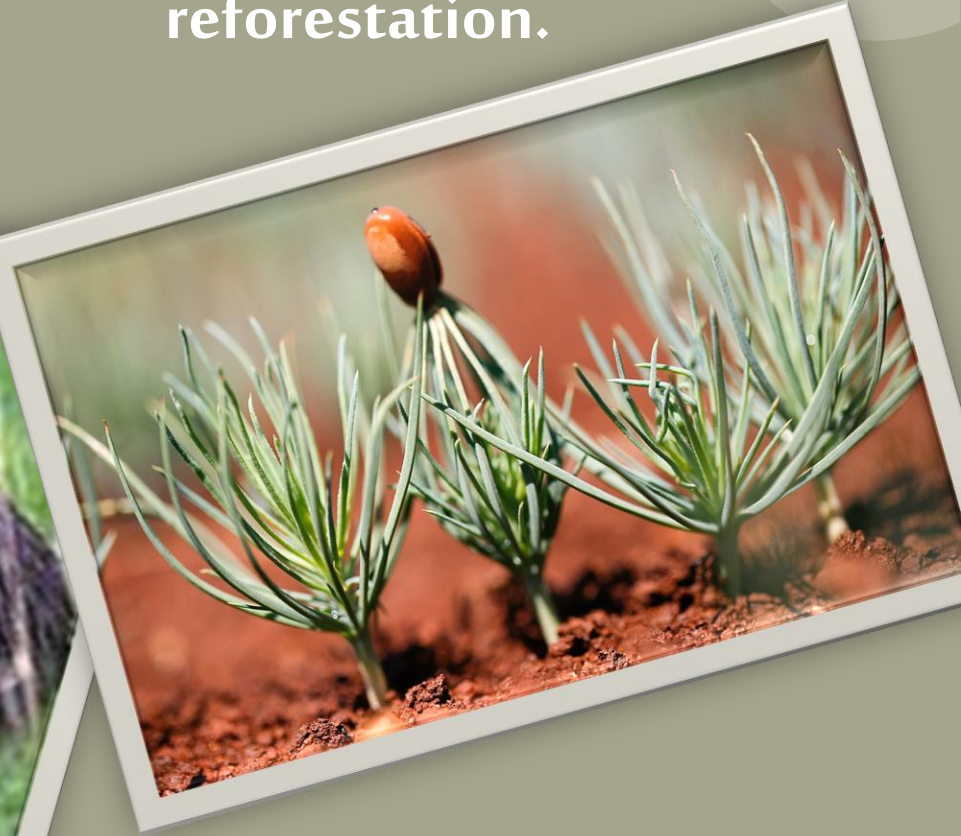
Clark's Nutcracker
eating pine seeds.



Black bears can climb
up to 12' on a
Ponderosa pine.



A Ponderosa seedling
for sale and
reforestation.



Center of SW Studies, Fort Lewis College

https://swcenter.fortlewis.edu/finding_aids/inventory/UsfSanJuanTCP.htm#HispSett

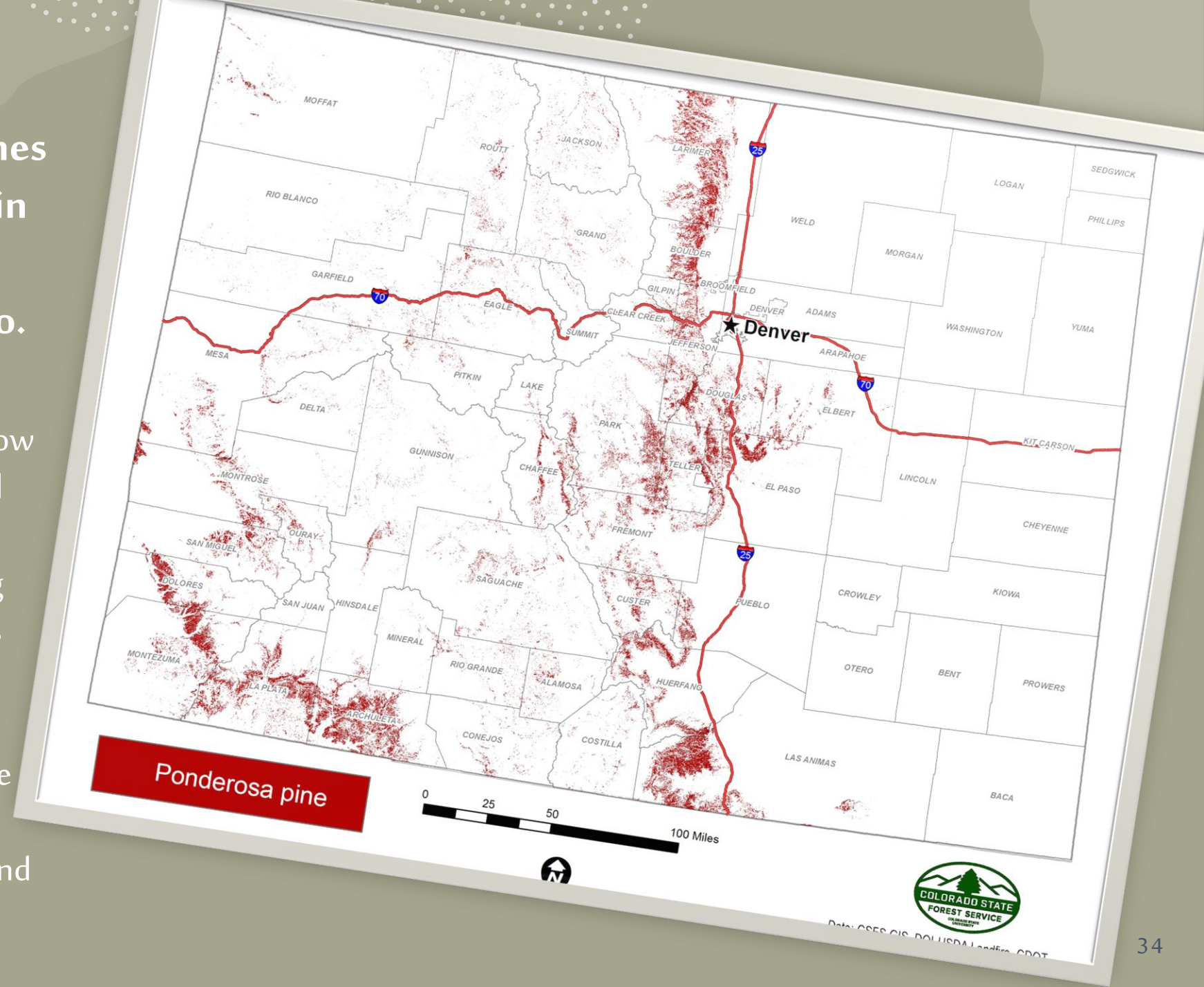
1926-
1927

McPhee logging town four miles north of Dolores produces 125,000 board feet of lumber daily; this is more than half of the total state production.



According to the Office of the State Historian, ponderosa pines of 150 feet high and four feet in diameter once covered the mesas and hills around El Vado.

Rural Archuleta County, Colorado, is now characterized by grass pastures flanked by stands of ponderosa pine and surrounded by the peaks of the curving continental divide. But it wasn't always this open. In the early 1900's, lumber milling was a prime economic venture with lumber mills dotting the landscape from Lumberton, New Mexico, just across the border, to Edith, Colorado, and on north to Pagosa Springs.



February 29—Leap Day

It's not something you can see from Earth, but Leap Day is technically an astronomical event.

It takes our planet about 365.2422 days to make one complete revolution around the sun. That means there are about six extra hours in every year that are not included in the calendar year. So, every four years, we have 24 extra hours to add to the calendar at the end of February. If there was no Leap Day, annual events including the summer and winter solstices, or vernal and autumnal equinoxes would shift around to later in the year. According to NASA, it would take only 100 years for the summer to start in mid-July instead of June.

The same skygazing rules that apply to pretty much all star gazing activities are key this month!

Have fun this spring!!



SHOW US WHAT YOU GOT!

Send in your best 3 pictures, per quarter, for any category, so at least one may be included.

Pictures are due by the middle of each month listed:

- February
- May
- August
- November

Email: Dawn Olson, dgodawn@gmail.com

