



ANNUAL REPORT 2019

RIVER DEEP FOUNDATION

Healing Lives One Adventure at a Time



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Special thanks to Josh Kuehl and the photographers of Task Force: ISO for the cover image and many of the photographs throughout this report.



INTRODUCTION

In 2019, the River Deep Alliance re-branded to River Deep Foundation (RDF) and re-worded our mission statement so as to more fully encompass and reflect our work. We are proud to be supporting an ever-increasing number of veterans and other disabled individuals to help them adapt or overcome their physical, psychological, or emotional challenges.

MISSION

The River Deep Foundation is dedicated to helping military veterans and other individuals who have experienced physical, emotional or psychological trauma—and those who assist them—to heal and re-engage in life through adventure, recreation and a network of support.

PROGRAMS

- 1. Recreational Group Outings.** These outings facilitate healing through active re-engagement in life. Activities include fishing, hunting, archery, art classes, cooking classes and more.
- 2. Collaboration with an alliance.** Our alliance of complimentary 501c3 not-for-profit organizations share resources, knowledge and ideas with the goal of providing more efficient and effective programming and outreach.

OUR STORY

The journey to the formation of the River Deep Foundation began 19 years ago when small business owner and outdoorsman, Bob Adwar, in his role as Humanitarian Outreach Chairman for the Denver Chapter of Safari Club International (SCI), began organizing hunting and fishing outings for patients of Craig Hospital, the nation's premier spinal cord injury rehabilitation hospital. The goal was to provide a relaxing day in the outdoors and show patients what they could accomplish, despite their new limitations. As injured and traumatized soldiers began to return from war zones in need of physical, psychological and emotional healing, the program expanded and started reaching out to veteran groups. As the number of outings, participants and partner non-profits increased, it became vital to solidify our mission and brand the organization for easier communication and outreach. Thus the River Deep Foundation was born.

OUTINGS PROGRAM

Daily life for individuals with a debilitating injury or trauma can be stressful and isolating, leading to depression, anxiety, hopelessness, despair and, in too many cases, suicide. River Deep organizes and implements recreational outings—often in the outdoors—that provide a priceless day of peace, relaxation, camaraderie and fun in a safe, supportive environment. These outings are shown to have a therapeutic effect and facilitate the healing process, greatly improving one's outlook and willingness to reengage in life. The River Deep Foundation funds the logistics of these group outings.

Outings include activities like fishing, hunting, archery, fencing, art classes and cooking classes. Many are instructional in nature and can be enjoyed equally by novices and experienced individuals alike. Based on the logistics and location of the activity some outings are exclusive to our veteran clients or Craig Hospital patients, however many are open to both, and provide meaningful interactions. Much of the outreach for participants is done through our case managers at our alliance organizations and through our partnership with the Warrior Transition Battalion at Ft. Carson. We invite families and caregivers to attend when possible to create a shared experience and connection in a environment free of daily life-stressors.





Alliance Program

The Alliance program of River Deep is an innovative and exciting collaboration between seven distinct not-for-profit organizations who each work, in their own way, to re-acclimate, re-enable and re-engage veterans or other disabled individuals and facilitate healing through an improved outlook and quality of life. While each organization provides different programs, their client bases often overlap. River Deep provides an easy referral channel for clients who may feel overwhelmed, to connect to other alliance services. We also support newer organizations on an as-needed basis to their bolster programs as they grow towards self-sustainment. The members share knowledge, ideas and resources to avoid “reinventing the wheel” as challenges come up. Additionally, the groups and their clients come together for the outings and activities planned by River Deep.

All of the member organizations have benefited in 2019 from general referrals, expertise, advice, shared outreach and promotion of their classes, events and fundraisers. The alliance committee members met quarterly to discuss issues, ideas, challenges and needs. The groups operate under a shared understanding and commitment to collaborate for the health of their organizations and ultimately the good of their clients.



NEW ALLIANCE MEMBER

In 2019 the national non-profit Quality of Life Plus (QL+) formalized their partnership with River Deep as an alliance member. QL+'s mission is to foster and generate innovations that aid and improve the quality of life for those who have served our country. To accomplish this they work with engineering students at top universities on specific adaptive challenges, improving on current designs or creating new ones.

In 2018, RDF launched an exciting initiative with engineering students from the Colorado School of Mines, made possible by QL+. The students were challenged to design user-controlled adaptive equipment that provides individuals with disabilities the chance to participate in archery, fishing and recreational shooting. This collaboration has allowed the students to work closely with these individuals at RDF outings, developing real-world solutions to their needs. The adaptive archery release kit was created and now is in use by our participants. The fishing and shooting projects will be completed in 2020. The ultimate goal is to make this new equipment available to a larger audience of disabled individuals who would otherwise not be able to engage in these sports.

As these projects evolved and the value of this relationship became clear, RDF invited QL+ to join the Alliance program. As an Alliance member, QL+ will be able to reach many more individuals who can benefit from the innovations made by current and future engineering students. The close consultation with RDF will help identify more possibilities and the ability to further collaborate directly with the end-users. The benefit to our participants is clear, and River Deep as a whole will benefit from increased credibility, visibility and relationships.



RIVER DEEP ALLIANCE MEMBERS

Anglers of Honor

Anglers of Honor (AoH) is dedicated to sharing world class, therapeutic fly fishing experience with military service personnel, and individuals with physical disabilities. The partnership with Kast King has provided fly rods to participants as well as other fundraising support. AoH has provided crucial organizational and operational support for River Deep.

Craig Hospital

As a large, established organization focused on spinal cord and brain injuries, Craig Hospital is able to provide outreach, operational guidance, contacts and credibility to our programs. They have benefited from by offering their recreational therapy clients expanded opportunities to participate in our diverse outings and activities.

Operation TBI Freedom

As the military program of Craig Hospital, Operation TBI Freedom (OTF) helps River Deep outreach to veterans suffering from traumatic brain injuries. Participation helps with the depression, isolation and anxiety that can result from a TBI. River Deep provides the majority of their recreational outing programs as a complement their other support service.

SCI Humanitarian Outreach Program

SCI Humanitarian Outreach Program (SCI HOP) was the initiator of the outings program. They bring expertise in organizing the outings, contacts and resources. River Deep has allowed their program and outreach to expand.

Task Force: ISO

Task Force: ISO (TFISO) empowers veterans to see the world through a different lens using positive imagery and the art of photography. Their veteran Photographers take professional images of the River Deep outings that are used as content for our outing summaries and other marketing materials. Our participants benefit by seeing positive imagery of themselves engaged in activities, boosting confidence and self esteem. TFISO benefits by providing in-the-field photographic training to their veteran clients. In 2019 TFISO photographed over one-half of our outings.

Victory Service Dogs

Victory Service Dogs (VSD) helps local veterans affected with PTSD or other disabilities gain improved quality of life through partnership with a service or support dog. They have been able use our shared expertise, consulting and contacts to help them grow into a new facility. In 2019 River Deep sponsored a veteran/dog team which funds them through the two-year training program.





GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In our years of experience developing programs, we have identified specific areas where we can stand out. These principles help guide the River Deep Foundation and its programs.

We understand that if an individual is in crisis, the family is in crisis. We incorporate participation of families in our programs wherever possible.

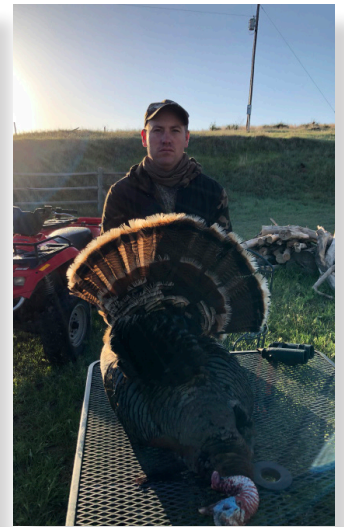
We believe in consistency. We provide diverse, year-around opportunities for participants so they can avoid returning to a state of crisis and despair.

We believe in providing an instructional foundation. Our goal is to enable clients to explore new interests, start a new hobby and have the confidence to build on their experiences.

We believe in the power of cooperation. The collaboration within our alliance allows us to offer more resources to our mutual client base and provide a sense of community.

We believe in positive and inclusive experiences. Each individual is treated with dignity and encouraged to enjoy each experience without pressure.





PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

In 2019 we continued with our expanded programs, and they proved to be very popular. Veterans and Craig Hospital patients joined us for art classes in Denver and Colorado Springs where they gained knowledge of various art techniques such as bookmaking, drawing, painting with acrylics and much more. We also ran two wild-game cooking classes this year with a full roster of attendees.

An exciting new opportunity came to fruition when Craig Hospital alumni Bob Dye offered to take some wheelchair bound patients on a two-day fly-fishing float trip down the Colorado River! In August of 2019 they spent two nights in Kremmling, CO at the Muddy Creek Cabins and two days fishing and floating. In addition to enjoying the peace of the river, much of the group was new to fly-fishing and they were able to get some instruction and have a new experience. Overall it was a wonderful adventure and we look forward to partnering with Bob and his team again.

Also new on the outing agenda were two different two-day turkey hunts held in Bird City Kansas and Kersey, Colorado. These trips for veterans were made possible by guides Colin Mulligan and Conner Flansburg and were a huge success!

Through the kindness of Stephanie MacLennan of Valhalla Hunt Club, Craig Hospital patients and staff were treated to a pile of German Shorthair Pointer Puppies! She made two different trips with the pups and brought so much joy and relaxation to the patients.



We now partner with the U.S. Air Force Academy Equestrian Center, Remount Foundation, Colorado Springs, CO for the equine therapy program. This program allows for more flexibility in that veterans can attend one or more sessions, but don't have to commit to more than one at a time. It is a combination of Equine Assisted Learning and Recreational Therapy. Participants find it centering, calming, relaxing and empowering. We are very pleased with this new format.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

River Deep held the 2nd annual Sporting Clays Fundraiser at Kiowa Creek Sporting Club in Bennett, Colorado on June 1, 2020. We collaborated with the Building Owners Association of Colorado (BOAC) who provided additional participants and outreach. There was a large turnout of attendees, everyone had a great time, and the event was a financial success!

On October 7, 2019 we hosted another successful fundraiser, our first Golf Tournament. Over 70 golfers joined us for a fun day at Meridian Golf Club, followed by lunch. In lieu of hosting our own golf tournament in 2020, we are excited to be partnered with Rocky Mountain Harley Davidson as a beneficiary of their established annual fundraising golf tournament. This high-profile tournament is sure to garner a lot of visibility for the River Deep Foundation.

We continue to participate in both the Kings Soopers and Safeway Community Fundraiser programs. Each store donates a portion of the dollar amount loaded to grocery gift cards purchased and used by our supporters. Additionally we are still part of the Amazon Smile program to receive cash back from purchases when a buyer chooses us as a non-profit to support, and we remain part of the Facebook Peer-to-Peer Fundraising platform.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

We have a continued relationship with radio host Steffan Tubbs from Colorado's News/Talk 710 KNUS. He invited Bob Adwar on to talk on his show about the River Deep Foundation and to promote the June sporting clays fundraiser.

The addition of Quality of Life Plus to our alliance and the promotion of our first golf tournament provided an opportunity to send a release to the press. The story was picked up by the Littleton Independent Newspaper and the Your Hub Section of the Denver Post.

We are continuing our social media outreach by posting all of our outing summaries to Instagram and Facebook, which helps grow our audience and awareness of our programs.

2019 PROGRAMMING REPORT

Programs

Archery Instruction

Art Classes

Camping/Ballooning

Equine Therapy Sessions

Family Fishing and Fun Days

Fencing Instruction

Hunting/Trap Shooting

Fly Fishing

Wild Game Cooking Class

Holiday Party

Puppy Day at Craig Hospital

Colorado River Float Trip and Fly Fishing

Total Programs: 65

We generate outing reports after each program with a written detailed summary and photographs that are posted to our website, social media and sent to stakeholders.

Program Participants

Programs: 65

Craig Hospital Participants: 178

Veteran Participants: 464

Family Member Participants: 431

Volunteers: 326

Staff: 102

Total Over All Participants: 1501

Programming Hours

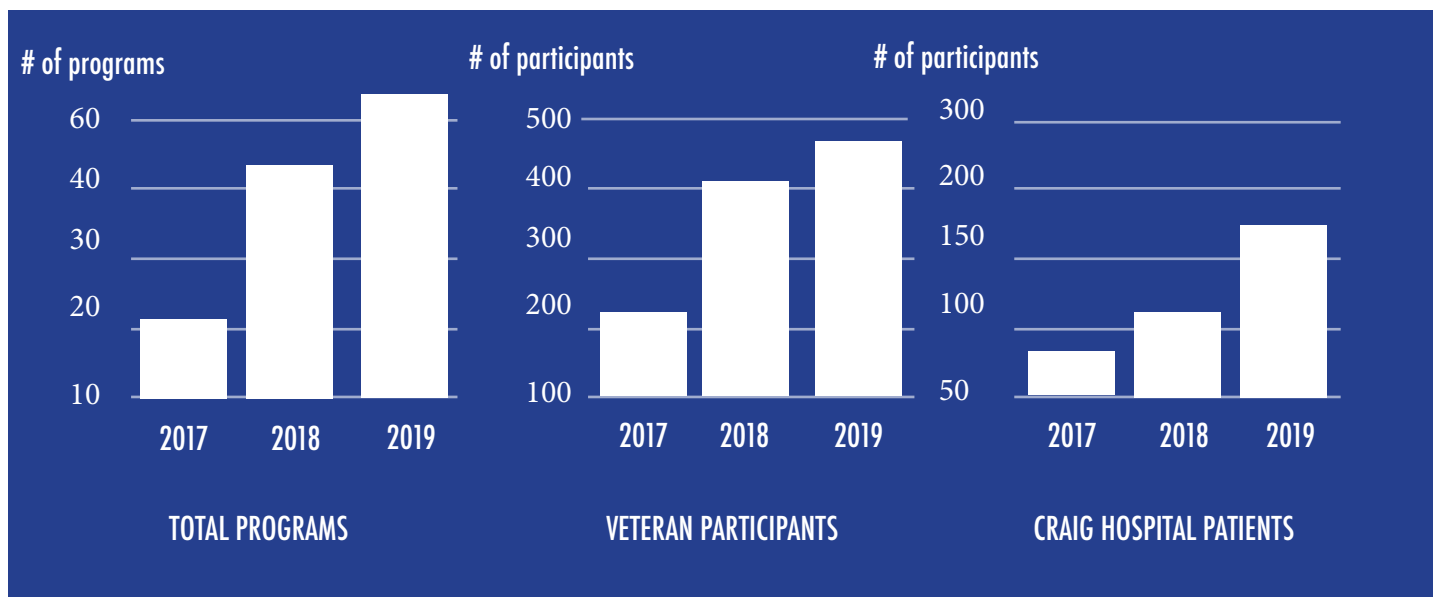
Program Hours: 895

Participant Hours: 12,985

We had an increase of 26% in the total number of participants over 2018.

We had an increase in participation of 141% from year 2017 to 2019.

2017, 2018, 2019 GROWTH COMPARISON



PROGRAMS



ARCHERY INSTRUCTION SESSIONS

RMS Gear in Lakewood Colorado hosted our participants and families for sessions of Archery Instruction.



ART CLASSES

The Art Students League of Denver and Cottonwood Art Center in Colorado Springs hosted art classes in drawing, painting, book arts and ceramics.



COOKING CLASS

Cookbook Author Leslie Fangman held classes on cooking wild game at the Specialty Appliance showroom in Greenwood Village.



EQUINE ASSISTED THERAPY SESSIONS

The U.S. Air Force Academy Equestrian Center Remount Foundation, hosts our equine therapy program. It helps veterans learn and practice coping skills for symptoms of anxiety, PTSD, and depression.



FAMILY FISHING & FUN DAYS

Colorado Youth Outdoors Swift Ponds Facility was the perfect setting to offer clients a day of relaxation with their families. The days included fishing, boating, archery, lunch and community building



HUNTING/TRAP SHOOTING

A variety of outfitters hosted us for hunts including pheasants, doves, turkeys and wild hogs.



FISHING OUTINGS

Anglers of Honor and Lincoln Hills Fly Fishing club provided access to premier waters for fly fishing and instruction. The facility has been restored to allow access for individuals with disabilities.



CAMPING/BALLOONING WEEKEND

The Pikes Peak Ballooning Society hosted a Celebration-of-Honor Balloon Fly for veterans at Eleven-Mile State Park in Colorado. Our clients camped, fished and boated with their families the day before.



FENCING INSTRUCTION

Denver Fencing Center provided fencing instruction to both veteran participants and Craig Hospital Patients.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

River Deep is dedicated to providing the highest quality experience possible for our program participants. We work diligently to tailor and design events that specifically target the physical, social and emotional needs of our participants. In an effort to make the River Deep experience effective and positive, we are continually evaluating and measuring our impact through informal check-ins with participants and family members/caregivers, as well as through a formal follow-up evaluation tool. We use the feedback to help us refine and enhance the experiences in order to reach for our greatest impact.

PROGRAM EVALUATION RESULTS River Deep Alliance Outings

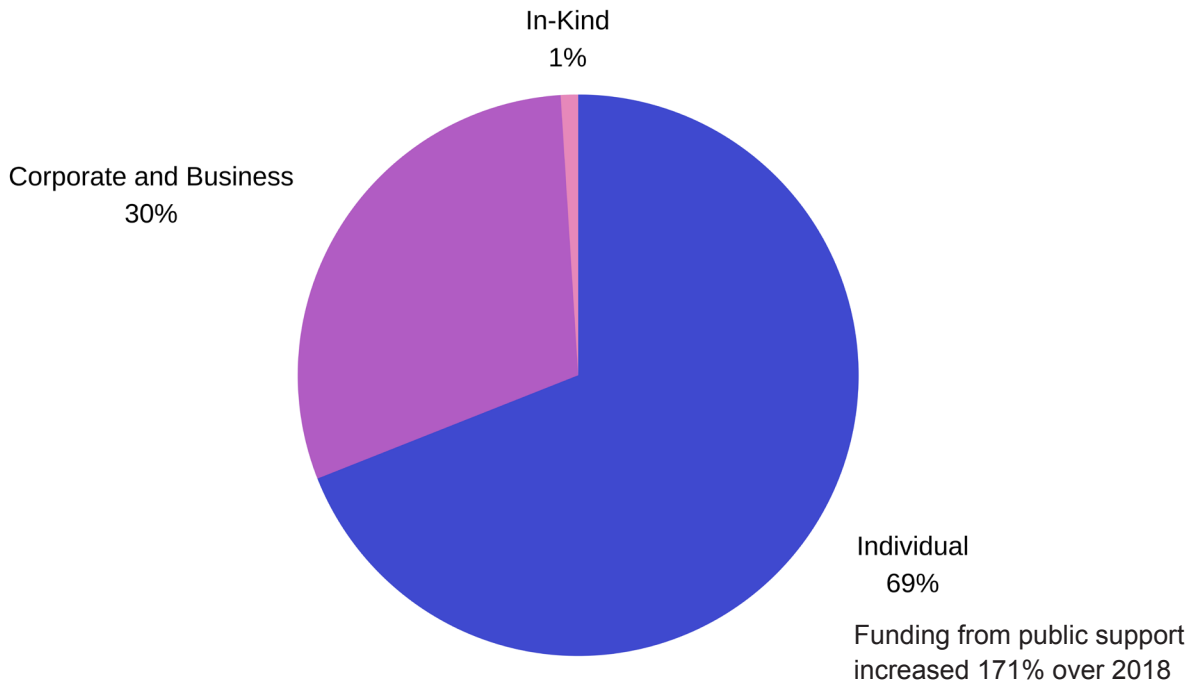
We routinely receive glowing testimonials and accolades through our informal check-ins. Below are the results from our formal evaluation tool. **On a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) participants reported the following average scores after attending our outings in 2019:**

As a result of today's outing....	Average Response
I feel more confident:	4.50
I had positive interactions with my peers:	4.79
I had positive interactions with my family and/or caregivers:	4.59
I met new people:	4.80
I had a reason to get out of the house and spend time outdoors:	4.83
I enjoyed engaging in physical activity:	4.82



Refocusing
Veteran
Lives

2019 FINANCIAL SUPPORT



A very special thank you to Mr. Robert F. Smith for his personal commitment in providing opportunities for deserving individuals. Mr. Smith’s generosity makes an immediate difference in the lives of our participants. We greatly appreciate his kindness.

VOLUNTEERS

Al Noraker
Angling University
Alan Dunlap
Alan Robinson
Allen Strong
Amy Duncan
Deborah Donner
Chris Dundas
Colin Mulligan
Conner Flansburg
Devron Codday
Ethan Emery
The Flyfisher Guide Service
Joe Hubbard
John and Natasha Jugl

Justin Hudson
Leslie Fangman
Lori Raymond
Mark Bassagani
Matthew Graeve
Patrick Duane
Randy Pruitt
Reid Atkins
Rob Krisner
Scott Polak
Shannon Boyles
Stephanie MacLennan
Travis Jones
Tyler Trouillot
Chuck Williamson



PARTNERS/OUTFITTERS

Our partners and outfitters are a vital part of our programming and we would like to acknowledge their assistance in making our outings successful.

Allen Strong–Holyoke CO

Amy Duncan–Vernon. TX

Art Students League of Denver

Blue Quill Angler—Evergreen, CO

Camp Bullwheel–Madison River, MT

Cottonwood Art Denver–Colorado Springs, CO

Colorado Youth Outdoors–Windsor CO

Denver Fencing Center–Denver, CO

Eleven Mile State Park–Colorado

Lincoln Hills Fly Fishing Club–Black Hawk, CO

RMS Gear–Lakewood, CO

Air Force Academy Remount Foundation–Colorado Springs, CO

Specialty Appliance–Greenwood Village, CO

Ballooning Clubs–Pikes Peak (BSOPP), Colorado Balloon Club, AAAA from ABQ New Mexico

Valhalla-Bijou Hunt Club–Bennett, CO



SUMMARY

We are honored to work beside our courageous participants. We are deeply grateful to our exceptional volunteers and donors. We are thrilled by the tremendous growth we experienced in 2019 and are energized and excited as we look to the future.





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