



Mountain Studies Institute

SAN JUAN MOUNTAINS, COLORADO



Happy Holidays!

December 2009 Issue

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Dear Friend of MSI,

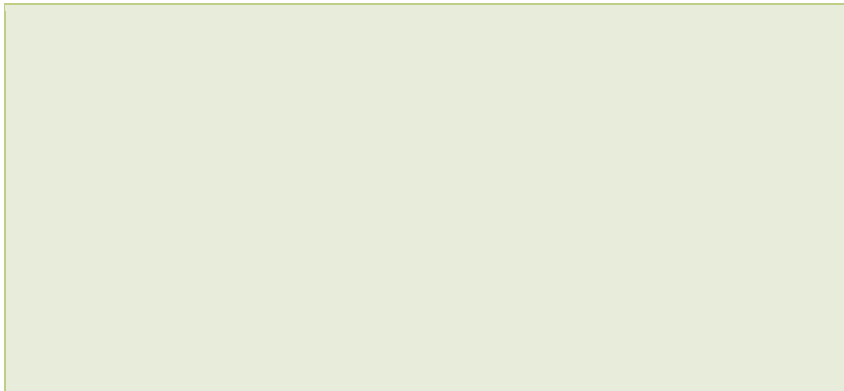
Isn't this snow grand? Yes, it's a lot of shoveling and plowing, but I had the distinct joy of watching my two year old son enjoy his first foray on skis. I hope you too are enjoying nature's winter blanket, whether you get a chance to ski, go sledding, snowshoeing or simply take a moment to look at our beautiful wintery landscape. As the winter holidays approach, MSI is still busy at work on a myriad of projects. I hope you will take a minute to read updates on the Silverton trails and field station, learn about the new southwest Colorado flora collection, and shine the spotlight on Aaron Kimple, MSI project manager. A special thanks goes out to you, all of our new and renewing members, who help make these efforts possible. *If you have not already, please remember to include MSI in your holiday gift-giving.*



Wishing you a happy holiday season and a wonderful new year!

Koren Nydick, PhD, Executive Director,
and the staff and board of directors at MSI

*To see photos, right click and select "download photos".



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Thanks to all of
our 2009
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"Peggy Lyon Western Colorado Flora Collection" now available



Peggy Lyon has collected and surveyed plants for decades in Western Colorado. Over the years of working for the Colorado Natural Heritage Program, she has become a "guru" of plant flora. Peggy has led wildflower walks as part of [MSI's Moving Mountain Education Series](#). She was integral to [MSI's baseline alpine plant survey](#) conducted in 2006 that began a long-term study (as part of the international GLORIA program). Upon her impending retirement, Peggy decided to donate her flora collection to MSI for display at Fort Lewis College. Thanks Peggy!

The specimens in this collection include vascular plants from the western slope of Colorado, from desert to alpine tundra. There are 475 species represented.

MSI facilitated the work to finish preparing the collection. A description, database, and instructions on how to view the specimens are available on the MSI website. [Read more.](#)

Animas River Corridor Revitalization Project Update

Silverton Trails Progress Report

MSI has taken on leadership of the Animas River Corridor Revitalization Project (ARCRP) in partnership with the Town and several other organizations as a service to the Community of Silverton. The components of the ARCRP, especially a trail system, are



improvements that many in the community have wanted for years. MSI became involved in 2006 when San Juan County invited MSI to lead a community visioning process, funded by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM). During this process MSI conducted over 20 public meetings and events to gather community input. The resulting ARCRP Community Vision was endorsed by both the Town of Silverton and San Juan County. MSI then took the initiative to write and submit several grant proposals to fund work identified by the community vision.

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 John Bregar
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 Douglas Brew
 William Hendrickson
 Maureen DeVeney
 Wally White
 Mark Williams
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 Grace and Gene Shearer
 Steven and Sandy Saterbak

In 2008 and 2009 MSI has focused on the trail section from the Visitor Center to the Train depot as well as other sections such as the Lackawanna wetland crossing. [READ MORE](#)

[Go to the ARCRP/Trails website](#)

Scientist Spotlight

Aaron Kimple - Project Manager



Aaron Kimple joined MSI's staff in February 2009 as a project manager. Aaron, who has a MS in environmental studies from Bard College, has hit the ground running. He served as MSI's intern program coordinator, directed the San Juan Air Quality Forum, managed the Moving Mountains Education Series, and is part of the Lightner Creek sediment study work group. He's also assisted in MSI's mercury study, ozone biomonitoring project, and has MSI's expanded air quality education program to include the Navajo Nation's Diné College.

"Working to expand MSI's outreach to include Diné College offers new possibilities to apply our scientific expertise to rural communities," says Aaron. "It is rewarding to be a part of building new, creative partnerships".

Aaron and his wife Kathy just welcomed their second child, a son born December 18. Congrats Aaron!

MSI Field Station - Fund Drive

Update on Progress

We are approaching the final month of fundraising for the purchase of a scientific field station in Silverton, CO. Including grants, matching funds, and individual donations, MSI has raised almost \$160,000. We also worked hard to secure a lease from the City of Silverton for the city-owned streets and alleys that cross the property.

Thanks so much to our donors, listed to the left.

We have not yet reached our fundraising goal, however, and time is running out. We have about \$87,000 additional in a matching challenge grant, if we can find more generous folks to donate and meet the dollar-for-dollar matching challenge.

Also thanks to:

Gates Family Foundation - \$45,000 challenge grant towards the purchase of the MSI Field Station

LPEA Education Grant Program - \$2,000 towards the "My Water Comes From the San Juan Mountains" Education project

New Belgium Brewing Company - \$2,500 for Operating

What else has MSI published?

[Check out our publication page](#)

All donations are greatly appreciated, and any donations of \$200 or more are eligible for a 25% Colorado Tax credit. Please consider giving a gift to the MSI Field Station fund this holiday season.

Scientific knowledge of the San Juan Mountains is very important for our future and the future of similar mountain ranges. Your gift will enable scientists and students access to the "heart of the San Juan Mountains" in order to learn, teach, and study this unique range. This field station will not only benefit us now, but will be a long-term center of scientific knowledge and economic development for generations to come.

This year, give the gift of science and education through a donation to MSI.

[DONATE HERE](#)

Climate Change Preparation

MSI is part of a Climate Change Preparation work group as part of the La Plata County Climate and Energy Action Plan coordinated by the Four Corners Office of Resource Efficiency. Read a [summary of climate change in Southwest Colorado compiled by MSI](#). We are asking stakeholders in La Plata County to fill out a [climate change preparedness survey](#) about how they think climate change may affect their community and natural resources. MSI also is working on climate change preparedness with the San Juan Public Lands Center and will hold information and strategy workshops this spring.

[Visit the MSI Climate Webpage here.](#)

As always, thank you for your continued interest and support for the Mountain Studies Institute.

Sincerely,

Koren Nydick and all the MSI Staff and Board of Directors

Newsletter developed by: Kathryn Rende OSM/VISTA, Mountain Studies Institute

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