In recent Colorado history, there have been three major water events--floods--that have marred, scarred, and shaped the residents of the Estes Valley. On July 31, 1976 a band of thunderstorms stalled over the Big Thompson Canyon. Twelve to fourteen inches of rain engorged the Big Thompson River and sent a twenty foot high wall of water surging down canyon. People fled their homes into the dark night in a desperate quest for survival. The flood surged eastward toward Loveland, moving at twenty mph and sweeping people, trees, homes, boulders, cars, and propane tanks from its path. In the final count, this disaster killed 144 people and caused over 35 million dollars in damage.

Almost ten years later, on the evening of July 14, 1982 in a period of ten minutes the dam at Lawn Lake in Rocky Mountain National Park gave way. Had it not been for former town trustee Stephen Gillette, a driver for A-1 Trash Service at the time, the town and many people might have been lost. Gillette was making a pick up at the Lawn Lake trailhead. He reported hearing a roar, looked up, and saw debris in the air. Millions of gallons of water rushed down Roaring River, creating the alluvial fan that is still visible today. The water hit the west edge of Estes Park around 8:00 in the morning. Flood waters destroyed 18 bridges, damaged road systems particularly Fall River Road, 177 businesses (75 percent of Estes Park's commercial activity), and 108 residences. The flood caused three deaths and was responsible for thirty million dollars of damage.

The 2013 Flood

The rain began September 10, with an inch of water recorded in Boulder. Nearly two inches fell the next day. Then on September 12, Boulder recorded 9.08 inches of rain -- nearly double the city's previous one-day record, and almost half its 20.5-inch yearly average. According to the U. S. Drought Monitor, the combination of moisture from Tropical Storms Manuel in the Pacific, and Ingrid in the Gulf of Mexico resulted in frontal systems that stalled for a 48-hour period over northern Colorado's Front Range. Upsloping conditions produced widespread rainfall along the Front Range. Numerous flash floods, property destruction and loss of life resulted. Hydrologists with the U.S. Geological Survey in Denver called the water in some communities a 1,000 year event. There was more water recorded in this flood than in the previous 120 years of record keeping.

In the aftermath eight people died, an estimated two billion dollars in damage occurred statewide, and there have been, to date, over 1300 recorded mud slides/debris flows. Larimer and surrounding counties took part in the largest air evacuation event since Hurricane Katrina.

The 2013 Flood in Little Valley

From September 11th through the 13th, rain pelted the foothills of the Rockies at a rate of approximately seven inches per day. The water poured down the mountainsides into the major tributaries of the South Platte: Boulder Creek, the St. Vrain, Big Thompson, and Cache la Poudre rivers. By September 12th residents in Estes Park, Lyons, Boulder, and Longmont understood this was no ordinary water event. For at least three days, little was known about conditions in the communities of Estes Park, Loveland, or Lyons. News media could easily access Boulder and report from there, but in our community neither cell phones nor internet were working. Television services were knocked out. Most residents could not receive or make calls to neighbors, friends, or family. Information was by word of mouth up and down Little Valley road. Rumors ran rampant. The only help to be had initially, was what the community members could provide for one another.
As the rain continued to fall in Little Valley on Thursday, September 12th, Sandy Burns called her husband Jack who was at work. “You have to come home, Jack. The water is cascading down the mountain behind the house under the propane tank, and I’m afraid it’s going to go.” At that point both Fish Creek and Little Valley roads were still intact.

Responding to Sandy’s call, Jack headed for home. When he turned off Fish Creek onto Little Valley road there were several cars in front of him. Jack was last in line. As Jack’s truck crossed the section of road just beyond the lower mailboxes, the now swollen east fork of Fish Creek, surging down from Jacob’s Road broke through and merged with the water running amok the length of Little Valley Road in a race to join Fish Creek.

For a few moments, Jack’s front bumper hung on the far side of the breach, his front axle already compromised. Jack was quickly able to scramble to safety, but the truck was immovably wedged. By the time Mike Cossota arrived from Hummingbird Way, there was no way to retrieve Jack’s truck. They could only stand and watch as more of the embankment gave way. The water pushed the truck sideways toward the ever widening and raging East Fork of Fish Creek. “It’s a goner,” they agreed. They were right. In the next several days the truck was rolled and then buried in mud, debris, rock, and uprooted vegetation. It was eventually shoved by the water across the now road-become-river and into the watercourse that had once been a mostly dry creek bed. That area is now called Jack’s Crossing.

By evening of September 13th, there was no Little Valley road to speak of. Upper Little Valley was cut off from lower Little Valley and the entire area was isolated—from Carriage Hills, from the town, seemingly from the world. Bob Christopher and Jeff Hancock accessed some sections of lower Little Valley by crossing a log that had fallen across the new water features. The log was apparently “discovered” by some of the Westley children and became a useful throughway. Bob and Jeff walked from house to house checking with neighbors to ascertain what needs there were and whether there were any medical emergencies. Christopher was already organizing a trip to town.

“We can hike out along the ridge east of Fish Creek to Hwy 36 and then into town,” he said. “There is no way to get across Fish Creek until you get to 36. All the roadway bridges that connect to Fish Creek are wiped out.” So saying, he headed out into the Uplands with a list of needs.

In upper Little Valley, Lee Kennicke called residents together for the first of many community meetings. “We’d like to know who wants to stay and who needs to go. What needs do we have? Food? Water? Pet food? Who has a working internet connection they can share? What other resources do we have that we can share?” There was conversation about whether to stay in Little Valley or evacuate. A vote showed that most residents were opting to stay, with only a few needing to leave for medical or family reasons. Those who needed to be evacuated were taken out in the next few days either on foot, or ATV. Although Bob Christopher volunteered his property as a helicopter landing spot, and one did circle, but no helicopter evacuations were needed.

Sandy Burns on those first few days:
Lee’s leadership was GREAT—don’t know what we would have done without her. I loved how we all voted to refuse to evacuate except for those who needed to. When the official emergency evacuation guys showed up at our home, they gave their prepared speech, but when I refused for the Burns household, they looked downcast. They said they had heard the same from almost every house in Little Valley. I felt rather badly for them so I offered them coffee!
Near St. Francis road there is a triangle of property in the meadow to the south of Little Valley. Early on owners Doug Klink, Gil Anderson, and Ron Gordon gave permission for heavy equipment to cross their land in order to access St. Francis Way and then upper Little Valley road. Mike Kearney was first in with his equipment. Someone asked how he would be paid for the work he intended to do. “I don’t know. I don’t care,” he replied. “I have friends in there. They are in trouble and I’m going in to help any way I can.” The day Mike Kearney showed up crashing and banging his way through the forest with his road equipment was historic. “I happened to be there,” said Sandy Burns, “right at the intersection of Dollar Lake and LV Road, and so were some others. We applauded and ran up to hug him when he jumped off his tractor and declared: ‘I’m here to help!’”

Late Friday or Saturday afternoon (September 13th, 14th) there was a meeting at town hall in Estes Park. Bob Christopher was the only Little Valley resident in attendance, having hiked out. Other participants were townspeople, not the folks directly affected by flood damage. Bob described the tenor of the meeting this way:

“They began talking about the ‘Red Binder.’ I soon learned that was the county’s evacuation plan for Dunraven Heights, the Uplands, Little Valley, Rockwood Estates, and Cheley Camp--basically everyone east of Fish Creek road. They also started talking about Carriage Hills. It was a very reactive, knee-jerk conversation. The logic seemed to be ‘get everyone out. Get rid of the problems,’ which just happened to be the people.”

On that same Saturday into Sunday, ATT helicoptered in an emergency communications tower. They set it up, hooked it to an emergency generator and when it was operational, they opened it up to all services--Sprint, Verizon, etc. The next day, Verizon arrived with a huge communications truck. When they were operational, they ran town communications, including wifi, for town government services. Finally Estes Park and surrounds were more or less back on the grid and able to communicate with each other and the wider world. It is important to note that Estes Valley local internet provider, Airbits, was the only service that continued to function fairly steadily throughout the crisis.

As residents and town government were working frantically to set up procedures and establish services, rumors continued to fly in Little Valley. Conflicting and confusing stories developed. “We are going to be forced to evacuate.” “There are looters already roaming through our community.” “Only those with medical emergencies will be evacuated.” “We are cut off. The town won’t help us.” At that point several men on ATV’s rode in to Little Valley and began to go door to door. “These guys rode up,” said one resident. “They knocked on our door and told us the town was forcing us to evacuate. They said we should pack what we could and get out now.”

Bob Christopher recalled his encounter. “The men I met were dressed in khaki shirts with ‘Emergency’ stenciled on them. They were harassing one of my neighbors, so I walked over to see what was going on. They were just telling my neighbor, ‘You have to get out NOW! If you don’t, the law will come in and force you off your land. Take what you can and get out now.’ I had heard the rumor about looters. I was suspicious.”

Not one to be put off easily, Bob asked the man for an official I.D., phone number, or the name of a supervisor. A big guy walked up from where the ATVs were parked and snarled, “I’m the supervisor. Whaddya want?” “I want your I.D.’s and to see the authority by which you are here,” replied Bob. “If you can’t provide that to me, I have a direct line to Sheriff Justin Smith. I’ll just give him a call...” With that, the men got on their ATV’s and left. Later, based on Bob’s description of the men, they were apprehended by the Sheriff’s department. Indeed these were the men who intended to loot homeowners. Residents were now more wary than ever about leaving their homes.
By Monday, September 16th everything had collapsed. Jack’s truck was gone. Fish Creek, from Cheley to Brody Ave. was unusable. There were sanitation problems resulting from broken mains near Brody. Residents in both upper and lower Little Valley were communicating nightly. They were functioning in what they called the “New Normal.” Both groups had “go-to people,” a supply line to town (one of the first of which was established by Melissa and Adam Strong in the form of a zip line across Fish Creek to waiting friends in Carriage Hills), a list of who to call in an emergency, and neighbors that would come to the rescue, listen, commiserate, help, or share a meal.

Monday was also the day the town government called a second emergency meeting. Knowing that it would be hard to get out again, and that flood residents needed to be represented, Bob Christopher composed an email Sunday evening, and sent it to several friends, asking that they read the email and represent the voices of our community. Recipients of the email were: Fr. Joe Hartmann, Bill Darden, Don Darling, Terry Balinski, and a few others. The text of what was read at the meeting follows:

What these people need to know is that we are not in peril. This is not a search and rescue operation. This is a sustainability situation. We need natural gas for heat and a temporary bridge at Little Valley and Fish Creek to get ourselves and vehicles, pets and some property out of here as the need arises. Ordering us out is ridiculous. We will not turn our properties over to looters, who have already been in the area and have been chased off. I reported the incident to Larimer County Sheriff’s Dept.

Evacuation is not a plan. Getting diesel fuel up to Mike Kearney in upper Little Valley, who has already repaired part of the road up there with his grader, is a plan. Getting him a culvert to repair the collapsed portion of Little Valley Road above us is a plan. Getting us a temporary bridge across Fish Creek Road is a plan. Please pass this along to anyone you think might listen to reason.

Everyone in Upper and Lower Little Valley got together last night in two separate meetings and we all feel the same. This is not search and rescue, this is 100 or so families who simply need a little help. We meet nightly and take a head count, ascertain if anyone is in need of medical assistance, if everyone has their medications, who needs food, water, pet food, etc. Everyone’s pantry and freezer is open to everyone else.

We are not going anywhere. Initial damage assessments suggest there is no significant damage to any of the homes, just to the roads and utility infrastructure. Some homes have wet crawl spaces and a few have water in basements coming from active springs.

Ordering an evacuation is just another way of buying time and removing the immediate part of the problem - the people. Evacuation is not a recovery plan. If you get rid of the people you get rid of the problem of having to deal with them. Tell the town they will have to deal with us - we aren’t going anywhere. We are residents and we are staying.

During this same period, Sandy Burns had calls in to Mayor Bill Pinkham, and apparently our voices were heard. On Wednesday, September 18th, she received a call back from the Mayor. Pinkham told Sandy that the town was willing to support Little Valley and residents in the Fish Creek corridor. Sandy became the major
point of contact with the Mayor’s office. The desire, as Sandy expressed it, was for honest communication from the town and the county. Sandy’s other important contact was with the Sheriff’s office. Her primary contact was Corporal Troy Badberg (our assigned LV Sheriff). He commented that he was extremely impressed with how we handled such a tremendous crisis, and that no other community that he was aware of had done this so effectively.

In upper Little Valley, Sandy Burns and LVOA President Lee Kennicke continued to work with Bob Christopher from the lower part of the valley. Flood zone shut down rumors continued to fly around town and throughout the surrounding area. However, the lines of communication established by Little Valley leaders provided consistent, up-to-date, factual information. Sandy provided Corporal Badberg with daily information from upper Little Valley so his officers could patrol effectively. Corporal Badberg also helped Sandy convince the USFS to close the Pierson Park gate, thus eliminating another source of access for looters and unauthorized personnel. In lower Little Valley, Estes Park police officer Rick Life and Larimer County Deputy Jack Newton reported daily to Bob Christopher. Bob was also appointed by Sheriff Justin Smith as the sole contact for unincorporated Larimer County in the area.

It was soon obvious that for Little Valley to remain a viable place for residents, some kind of bridge would have to be established to allow entry and exit into and from Carriage Hills. Because Mike Kearney already had big equipment in Little Valley, he was contacted by several residents and members of the Road Board. Bob Christopher said we were going to have to put in a bridge ourselves, as that certainly didn’t seem to be a priority for the town. The most sensible point to establish a one lane bridge was at the narrowest part of Fish Creek at the bottom of Little Valley where egress could be directly onto Rambling Rd. and into Carriage Hills.

The bridge building story as told by Bob Christopher:

And so we began. Mike Kearney up on the big equipment and several others of us standing ground. Mike was about on his second shovel full of sand and rock—dredging a place to put in culverts—when the town shows up across the road with what was essentially a cease and desist order. We were being prevented from putting in our own bridge. Mike stands down. We talk. Mike says he can’t do the work with a cease and desist. About a half hour later, the county shows up with their own demand that Mike cease and desist. About a half hour later, the county shows up with their own demand that Mike cease and desist. Mike is sitting on his excavator, exasperated.

I got a call from a friend of mine up at the Stanley Hotel. She was telling me about a news agency that was stuck in town because Trail Ridge Road had shut down. Their helicopter was just leaving the Stanley with the news people. So I told my friend, “You ought to see what’s happening here. We were starting to dredge to put in a bridge and the town shows up to stop us...”

Pretty soon, here comes the news helicopter, flying directly up Fish Creek Rd. We can see the cameras and the reporters inside. A few minutes after that my phone rings and I’m listening to a live, Channel 4 broadcast of Sheriff Justin Smith as he says, “Now that’s what I’m talking about... people taking matters into their own hands. Getting stuff done. That’s what these folks are made of...”

Twenty minutes after the broadcast, trucks from the town show up and unload four culverts. No one says a word. They just unload them and take off. Pretty soon after that, an engineer from the county shows up with advice about the angle of the bridge to the water flow and other bridge building information. The rest, as they say, is history.
Ultimately, the bridge had to be certified in order for propane trucks to cross into Little Valley. Certification was obtained and this was one of the main factors that allowed residents to stay in Little Valley during the winter and beyond.

As the days passed, progress continued up and down Fish Creek Rd. and inside Little Valley. Mike Cossota loaned Jack Burns his old SUV so Jack wouldn’t be without a vehicle. Residents with ATV’s continued to provide ferry service to and from town, and Frank Lancaster, town administrator, extended the time period in which ATV’s could drive the roads into and out of town. Bill Conger and others from the Road Board continued to work with Mike Kearney to shore up and rebuild road sections. Informational and community building meetings continued in upper and lower Little Valley. Bob Christopher gave the following account of a typical agenda:

Wednesday September 18, 2013 Lower Little Valley Resident’s Nightly Meeting Update

1. From Jack Newton, Sheriff Investigator, Reassigned to Emergency Mgmt.
   - Fire Rescue, Emergency Response personnel are through in LV.
     If anyone asks you about evacuations, they are not authorized.
   - Road from EP to Glen Haven cleared last night for emergency vehicles only
   - LV temp bridge is completed and ready for foot traffic and vehicles.
     NO motorcycles or ATVs because the bridge surface is simply packed dirt and these types of vehicles will tear up the surface in no time.
   - Any further news pertaining to LV will be relayed to me via Jack Newton.

2. Rick Life, EP Police Sgt. - No word today
   GAS
   - The latest on the gas situation from Scott Dorman with the EPFD is that the 6" main into town is somewhat compromised. Xcel is working to stabilize that line. There are multiple open and broken lines around town that have to be capped or reconnected. We still do not know the plan for LV, but I will continue to try and get info daily.
     - Sandy Burns will follow up with the Mayor to find out about Xcel and the gas line reconnect at LV and Fish Creek.

3. Sandy Burns, LV Resident
   - Spoke with Mayor Bill Pinkham who told her:
     - Fish Creek Rd. and the utility infrastructure is the top priority
     - Town is working with RMNP to build a dam upstream along Fish Creek to lessen the water flow and expedite repairs
     - The Lily Lake dam is holding, no problems seen so far
     - Electricity will NOT be turned off to LV. There may be short outages if re-routing of power sources becomes necessary, hopefully not.
   - Businesses will open this weekend, some already open.
   - The Mayor understands many LV residents want to stay and is backing that idea 100%.
   - Mayor Bill is already planning for next year's locust infestation!!!
HIGHWAYS
- Hwy 36 has been declared the State's top priority by the Governor.
- Hwy 7 is now open for commercial traffic

FOREST SERVICE
- Dick Edwards, Forest Service
  - Sandy asked him to close the 119 gate, he is hesitant. Sandy will follow up with Mayor Bill to see if it can be done on our end. This is just too easy for looters to enter into LV from Pierson Park.

POST OFFICE
- The inspection of bridges going into the Post Office should be completed today.
- Mail has been brought over from Grand Lake to our Post Office
- Mail delivery: Residents will have to go to the Post Office with photo ID that has a local address on it in order to get their mail.
- I will try and work out a mass collection of mail for LV residents so that a few people can go down there and get everyone's mail, then deliver it up here. The congestion at the Post Office will likely be pretty bad.

TOWN VOLUNTEERS
- Tim McPhee and others have set up a Volunteer Clearinghouse in town manned by 100 plus volunteers ready to assist in evacuation, helping clear debris, moving vehicles, whatever. Call 970.577.3975

LITTLE VALLEY ROAD
- The County's position on LVR is that they will assist with funds and materials to restore LVR to one lane, out only. They will assume no liability for vehicles entering LV. Be very careful where you drive as we now have percolating springs dampening the road and these areas can collapse without much warning.
- There is no snow removal scheduled for this winter. Mike Kearney cannot bring in the equipment and risk his own loss of property, his equipment, or risk his own well being plowing a road he has no idea whether or not it is solid or intact underneath the snow.

As the weeks went on, residents all adjusted to the “New Normal.” Sandy Burns recalls that after our collective decision to stay and protect our homes, to tough it out so to speak, we encountered numerous obstacles: flood damage, personal challenges, and ongoing issues with government officials who continued their efforts to make us evacuate. “Many attitudes and official actions baffled us,” she said. “Especially given that we were all working as hard as we could to take care of ourselves. But I think the obstacles made us stronger, and helped us pull together.” The volunteer response from everyone to make Little Valley safe was amazing. The following is a list of what residents worked on and accomplished:

• repairing roads
• sharing resources
• assisting folks who needed to leave either by hiking out or ATV’s
• getting and delivering supplies and groceries
• sharing internet access
• putting on the great margarita parties that Mayor Pinkham somehow heard about and referred to many times in public

Louisiana native Brad Barnett was heard to say, “Aw, you people just don’t know how to handle disasters. We’re used to hurricanes. Could be stranded for weeks. So we just put together some Jambalaya, pour a few drinks, and carry on!”

As winter came on it was obvious that the huge crevasses on either side of Little Valley Road would, in places, constitute a real hazard to vehicles. Doug Klink, Bill Conger, and Bob Christopher undertook reconstruction of the most dangerous and unstable edges of the road running from the Repola house to the junction of Little Valley Road and Fish Creek. That section of road collapsed in the flood and created a perilous situation for drivers, especially at night.

Doug arrived with his Skid Steer Loader and a dump truck he borrowed from Mike Kearney. Hauling in no less than six loads of fill dirt from his own commercial property on Elm Road, Doug filled the crevasse. After each dump of fill dirt he used his Skid Steer to move the material into the void. Bill and Bob hand shoveled the loose material, packing it into the hillside. Then they formed a rock surround at the face of the culvert to keep it open. In one day the three men managed to remove a major road hazard and secure the safety of Little Valley residents driving in and out on the temporary bridge. We are grateful to Doug for his generosity and untiring efforts to repair Little Valley Road and keep Little Valley a viable community.

The effectiveness of Mayor Bill Pinkham and Frank Lancaster in solving some of our worst problems was a major factor in our ability to move forward. Through the fall and into winter, Mike Kearney, Marlin Godfrey, Bill Conger, Bob Christopher, Doug Klink, and Mike Cossota continued to shore up, fill, and keep watchful eyes on the roads. During the winter of 2013 - 2014, the county could not plow our roads due to the combination of road bed instability and heavy plow trucks. The slack was picked up by residents volunteering to clear the roads on which they lived. Residents used ATV’s, pick ups, and Jeeps with plows. Sometimes driveways and “tricky” road areas were made passable by shovels and plain hard work. We foundered. We got stuck. We called one another for a tow out of this drift or that, but in the end, we came through with flying colors--together.

The Little Valley Owner’s Association nominated Mike Kearney for an award from the town to be presented at the annual tree lighting ceremony. Although the nomination was accepted, the town decided they could not single out individuals for all the heroic and herculean efforts they provided during and after the flood. There were just too many to recognize individually. Instead, the town read a proclamation honoring the efforts of many who helped put all us back on firm footing. Little Valley’s nomination, plus letters of thanks from LVOA to individuals, and other flood-related documents can be found in the appendix to this story.

Great thanks to Mike Cossota, Bob Christopher, and Sandy Burns for stories about lower Little Valley and upper Little Valley during the Flood. “You know,” said Sandy, “there were things happening at both ends, and I’m not sure all of the residents of our community knew the extent of what was going on.”

My personal thanks and love always to my partner Pam Liebing, who created a space of time in which I could write, and then patiently edited what I had written.
In the next section, readers will find personal accounts of the flood written by LVOA residents. I am indebted to: Bob Christopher, Sharron Bryan, Mark Moraczewski, Alicia Cossota, Craig and Laurie Kramer, Richard and Mona Ackerman, Julianne Biehl, Doyle Baker, Marianne Oepping, Deborah Westley, Melissa Strong, Joy Barnett, Linda Wells, Pam Liebing, Sandy Burns, and Lee Kennicke. The stories shared by residents are the most moving first hand accounts of what was actually going on—from the discovery of the many washouts on our roads and properties, to the touching care and love neighbors extended and received.

After the residents’ stories there is an appendix of documents and images related to the flood. The images were contributed by many residents. They show the flood from the very first day that waterfalls burst from hillsides to cascade down Little Valley Roads to the installation of the temporary bridge allowing residents a way in and out of Little Valley. Great thanks to everyone who sent pictures at this time. Unfortunately it was a chaotic time and proper credit has not been given to any of the photographers.
Stories from Little Valley

Over the years in Estes Park, it seems we have had more than our share of natural disasters. We are certainly no strangers to flood, fire, pestilence, and our own human-created tragedies. Through it all, we lean on family, help our neighbors, love our friends, grab our shovels, shop-vacs, ATV’s, and casseroles, and go forward. The flood of September, 2013 was no exception. It was amazing to people coming out of flood ravaged areas like Little Valley, Glen Haven, and Lyons, to find folks in town going about their lives in a somewhat “business as usual” way. But even in town, there were businesses lost and damaged, and homes destroyed. A forecaster in the National Weather Service office called this flood “biblical.” And yet everywhere one looked, people were out helping one another as best they could.

Rocky Mountain National Park and its programs and staff have experienced more trauma in the past year than it normally sees in ten years: first an infestation of pine beetles, then a large backcountry fire, then rain on burned slopes that caused trail damage and mudslides. The sequester delivered by the Federal Government caused a cut in resources and programs. The final insult was a total shutdown of the Park and government services in the aftermath of our massive flood. Michael Rupp, a supervising Park Ranger, wrote a message to his staff as he and his family were leaving Rocky for assignment to Zion National Park. The message seems like an appropriate introduction to the stories of our Little Valley residents describing their experiences during the 2013 flood.

Michael wrote:

I cannot speculate when the park may open to complete recreation and when access will be restored to a point to welcome throngs of visitors to the area...I'm far from a Biblical scholar but for those of you keeping score this is what I have on my scorecard:

Mountain Pine Beetle: While not quite locusts, I would say they are considered an epidemic and ...they shall cover the face of the earth, that one cannot be able to see the earth, and they shall eat the residue of that which is escaped, and shall eat every tree which growth for you out of the field...

Plague of Wild Animals: Between Chronic Wasting Disease, Elk Culling operations, and how we handle Mountain Goat reports....Behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thy cattle which is in the field, upon the horses, upon the asses, upon the camels, upon the oxen, and upon the sheep: there shall be a very grievous murrain. (too similar to Moraine in my opinion)

Summer of 2012: Between the High Park fire and the Fern Lake fire, most of us would have sworn that we were cast alive into a lake of fire and brimstone.

September Floods: This year has been a challenge as well, ...Take thy rod, and stretch out thine hand upon the waters, upon their streams, upon their rivers, upon their ponds, and upon all their pools of water...

And I would say if the place starts to teem with frogs (or our Boreal Toads) then that's not a good sign.

Here follows the voices of our friends and neighbors recounting their experiences through the Flood of 2013. The stories are poignant, tender, frightening and full of the feelings that only first hand recollections can give.

Bob Christopher to his son in Paris on September 17, 2013:
The waters have receded 70% or more which is great. No damage to the house or property other than the creek erosion which is huge. Residents have taken it upon themselves to contract with a local excavation company to create a temporary one lane bridge between Little Valley Rd. and Rambling Drive, crossing what used to be Fish Creek Rd. That will allow residents here to get out into town.
The town is actually in pretty good shape. Safeway is open and stocked, though they had to bring trucks in over Trail Ridge Rd up until Sunday. Hwy 7 got fixed enough to allow traffic the other day. That route consists of I-70 to Central City Parkway, to Hwy 119 Blackhawk to Nederland, to Hwy 72 to Hwy 7 along the Peak To Peak area, then into Estes. It is about a 2 hour drive under optimal conditions. Hwy 34 between Estes and Loveland is completely destroyed for 17 miles and has been declared a total loss, total rebuild estimated at 2 years. Hwy 36 has two major areas where the highway collapsed into the St.Vrain river, so it is impassable, no estimate on when it might open, probably months at best. The section of Hwy 7 from Lyons to Allenspark is reportedly impassable and a total loss. Lyons and Pinewood Springs were both completely evacuated a few days ago. Hwy 72 into Wonder View is heavily damaged and impassable. Larimer County alone has 14,000 homes destroyed, 12,000 people evacuated, not sure of the loss of life to people and animals but I am sure it is terrible. Colorado was hit hard, very hard. From Colorado Springs north to Larimer and Weld Counties the devastation is unheard of. Surprisingly, Denver and the suburbs fared pretty well from what we understand - we do get DirecTV so we watch the local and national news daily. So many reservoirs and lakes breeched and spilled they are too numerous to count. Aurora and other parts of Arapahoe County were hit very, very hard.

Our Little Valley area is split in two due to a 30 ft long breech in Little Valley Road. The upper residents are totally stranded unless they hike out from the very top down through Cheley Camp and out towards Mary's Lake on Hwy 7. We can hike out along the ridge east of Fish Creek to Hwy 36 and then into town. There is no way to get across Fish Creek until you get to 36, all the roadway bridges that connected other roads to Fish Creek Rd. are wiped out.

I sent 5 friends, who live in town, to the Town Meeting yesterday armed with a long text message to act as a voice for the Uplands, Little Valley and Rockwood residents. Essentially we told the town and county we would not evacuate and would not turn our homes over to looters (who are already roaming the area). I tried to get them to understand that we are not in a Search And Rescue mode, we are in no peril and the properties here are for the most part undamaged. We are in Sustainability Mode, if you will. We simply need a one lane bridge to get vehicles out, and to get the gas hooked back up for heat. We can manage the rest. The town and county gave in and rescinded the evacuation plans for these areas east of Fish Creek. They have decided to do the right thing and back the resident's efforts to build a temporary bridge across Fish Creek and work to get the gas line hooked back up. The water line was fixed 2 days ago. They are talking about setting up Port-A-Potties to reduce the amount of sewage now discharging freely into Fish Creek down by the golf course where the sewer main is broken apart. This all may sound awful, but to us this is progress!

As I said, we have no sewers left, water has been restored but we use it sparingly and cautiously (boiling it first), still no natural gas for heat or cooking, sparse internet at two neighboring houses (who have Airbits Microwave Internet still up and running), no land lines, no DSL, no roads to speak of. But we do have electricity which is a huge relief.

Once the temporary bridge is built in about a week, hopefully we will drive the two vehicles out of here and over to the other side of Fish Creek. We can walk over there and drive out if need be. That is a really big deal as you might imagine. We are OK. Don’t worry. Love, Dad

Bob’s son, Adam replied immediately. “Dad, you can’t send me a text message like that and then say, ‘Don’t worry.’”
Sharron Bryan -- Moon Trail Way -- Remembering
There were low, heavy clouds on the evening of Wednesday September 11--just before the storm broke wide open. When it was all over, what I remember most:

- Little Valley Road coming apart
- The new canyon that opened up at the junction of Black Squirrel and Little Valley Road
- Jack's car in "the creek"
- Mike Kearney fixin' our roads

Thanks from Sharron to everyone who helped:
Special thanks to Brad Barnett who used his 4-wheeler as the Little Valley Taxi Service. Brad helped evacuate those wishing to leave. He brought in supplies for people in need of food items, medicines, and in my case gasoline! He was out every day checking and talking to neighbors all over Little Valley. He cut down trees in the road and hauled dirt and rocks to fill in holes and ruts.
Special thanks to Bonnie and Pam who helped even though they were out of town. Several of us who were short on dog food could relax after their sweet pup Lucy donated all of her food to feed other pets! They graciously told me to take not only the dog food but all of the "people food" in their house. Not knowing when we would be able to get to Safeway their generosity sure was welcome.
Of course, Mike Kearney who on his own built us a road out and a bridge to "mainland" Estes!!
Thanks to Airbits, we never lost our WiFi connection!! That was huge as we were able to keep in touch with friends and family!
What we learned: keep plenty of canned goods, dog food and bottled water in the house. Never let the propane tank get below 50%, always keep at least half a tank of gasoline in the cars.

Mark Moraczewski -- Star Way
Our flood journey started as a fun Wednesday night at Coffee on the Rocks. We listened to Dick Orleans and talked about the weather. Never did a thought come across our minds that we were in for a major storm and that we would become part of Estes Park history. We drove home that night in a nice rain fall and talked about hoping the weather would clear so that we could do some more hiking before heading back home to Nebraska.

Thursday morning we got an early wakeup call from my in-laws who own a home by Eagle Rock School. They were having water coming into their basement and needed help. My Father in-law asked if we had any damage and I was kind of perplexed that he would ask that question because we really didn’t know what was going on. Man it’s vacation, and I was still half a sleep and so what, it always rains a little in the mountains, only this wasn’t a little. So we went and got the shop vac and a couple fans and I called Marla Howard next door and asked if she had a wet and dry vac, which she did and donated to the cause. By 8:30 we were heading down the mountain. But before getting into the car I asked my wife, “Do you hear that?” And she says, “What?” and I said, “Listen….. Someone moved the Big Thompson to our neighborhood.” You could hear the water roaring down the mountain. The watercourse unfortunately was Little Valley Road.

We headed down the road and got just about to the mail boxes when the we stopped because of all the water streaming across the road. Not knowing what was under the water, we decided to turn back. That turned out to be a good decision because we had we gone out we would not have been able to get back in. We immediately called my father in law and told him we were not coming and he understood. As that day went on we all lost cell coverage so we could not call anyone or let family know we were all right.
Our journey ends when we received a call Sunday night from my Father-in-law telling us, “There is a person in your neighborhood that owns a business in town. He has been hiking out the last three days and maybe you can hike with him. My wife called Cal Moore and he started to explain to the route he has been going, and since we’re not familiar with it, she asked if we could hike in with him. He agreed and we met him and his family Monday morning at 7:15 which is when our journey home started.

As we all know with every storm there is a ray of sunlight and ours was that we shared dinner the four nights with neighbors Marla Howard, Don and Laurel Nicholson and Jeff Legg (one night). We got to meet Jim and Sharron Bryan, Brad Barnett and Cal and Joy Moore. Before ending this I would like to thank some people for their thoughtfulness and kind acts. Sharron Bryan, who had an internet service that could get out and she was able to send a message to her daughter who then texted our daughter and advised that her parents were okay and that we would be in touch ASAP. Our daughter responded to their daughter that she got the message and thank you. When Sharon got the message from her daughter she shared it with my wife which brought some tears of relief. To Marla Howard, thanks for all the homemade bread and game night. To the Moore’s thanks for being our trail blazers and getting us back to town.

Alicia Cossota...Hummingbird Drive
Note: Alicia sent a video of a hummingbird via iPhone. This is what she wrote about the experience:
I was sitting on the porch on Monday after the flood and was reflecting that it didn't seem possible that the roads were mostly gone. Especially when the sky was so beautiful and this hummingbird was so happy with the flowers. This is my favorite video - there is always more hope when the sun is shining. :) 

Bonnie Beach back to Alicia about the hummingbird...
It's amazing, you know all that happens...and then the sun shines and the sky changes from dawn to daylight and the night comes again and things just keep going on...and you sit in the middle of all that the water has done to our valley, and you think about the lives in the canyons and towns that have been turned upside down...and the sun shines and the hummers come for the sweetness of the flowers, and despite all that happens, you sit there watching the hummer and thinking about the sweetness of your life.

Craig and Lorie Kramer -- Black Squirrel Drive
The only comment we have is that by Tuesday when the rain had begun, we wondered if we should begin building an ark. When we saw the “Black Squirrel water feature” which originated between Grahlmann’s and our property, all we could think was some people pay huge sums of money to have these types of water features constructed.

Richard and Mona Ackerman -- Moon Trailway
“Although the circumstances were adverse to say the least, it was a time to meet new people and make new friends. Helping one another brought out the best in all of us.”

Juianne Biehl -- Dollar Lake Road
I am so proud of all you fine survivors! I have followed this through the eyes and photos of many of you fine people. I feel I have been there in spirit along all with my Mountain Strong neighbors. It just emphasizes the spirit of those who chose the mountains as a way of living.
Doyle Baker -- Moss Rock

My mountain flood experience started on Wednesday morning when I woke to find that the retaining wall just above our house had collapsed. At that point, I had no information or thoughts about what was going on elsewhere. I spent much of that day shoveling mud and hefting 75 pound blocks into a temporary wall in order to keep the mud slide away from the house. When I came in late, Kathy told me that cell phones and the internet were down, and that the news was talking about the rains and flooding on the Front Range. Nothing about Estes Park. By evening, we were hearing roaring water like living next to a river and knew something big was up. Friday morning, I went up to look and the gullies on either side of our house had become rivers across Moss Rock. I had to go see where all the water was going. That was when I saw what had happened to the road - and my experience became our experience.

The destruction of the road was of course, mind blowing. Even more amazing were the encounters when walking down to Jacob's Creek. So many members of our community were out looking, sharing experiences, and already talking about implications. On Saturday morning when I went again, there was already a "flood change" of attitudes. Some people were jumping in to make initial repairs to paths and fences, while others were figuring out solutions for those who needed medicine, food or other supplies. Plans were already emerging for those who needed to winterize and leave. Lee set up her communications network. Lynne was our link on Moss Rock. They kept us informed and offered use of their internet. Kathy and I settled into waiting mode as we watched the destruction on the front range on TV, still wondering why so little mention of Estes Park. The waiting continued over the next few days and then the news came that Adam and Melissa Strong were organizing a walk-out. This was too good to miss. I joined the small group, some going out to get supplies and some walking away from their homes for the winter. When walking out, we ran into people from the Fire Department going up on ATVs to evacuate others. Moss Rock was at the top of their list. I let Kathy know and continued on to Safeway. Safeway seemed almost completely normal, contrary to what we had heard - and so the contrast was stark between recovering downtown and the shadow of evacuation hanging over our heads. Kathy and our cat went out that evening but I was determined to stay. Our outing that day had shown me - and others - that we could and would find ways to get supplies and stay in our homes.

The next week could not have been much more of a contrast. The weather was beautiful, our house (except the retaining walls) was fine, our internet and phone were back, and yet we were cut off except for walking out - which I did a couple of times to explore the damage to Fish Creek. Everything changed, of course, when Mike Kearney and the Town were able to get the bridge and temporary road in place. It was just amazing what so many people were doing to get our recovery started, while also looking after each other. By then, we were facing the prospect of having to leave for the winter but still hopeful that some solution would be found. Many people who had places to go drove out, leaving for part or all of the winter. It was hard to be hopeful that more could be done, or to even feel that more should be done when compared to the poor people who lost their homes and utilities. Still, one always hopes and the hopes were not disappointed.

One day, the temporary bridge was widened, then the first propane truck made it up the hill, our mail person started delivering to the upper boxes, elk made their belated entry to Estes - and soon things seemed more normal than not despite the continuing concerns about being able to make it through the winter. That is when "Little Valley Resilience" took over for me and many of us. Thoughts changed from "what are we going to do if we have to leave" to "we'll figure it out since we're not leaving." Now we are having a beautiful fall, the Park is back open and through the wonderful efforts of the Town and our PID, the worst parts of our road have been
upgraded. There undoubtedly will be challenges this winter and it will be a long time before our road, houses, and town are back to normal, but the early images of the flood destruction and the response and resilience of our community will linger long after.

**Marianne Oepping -- Little Valley Road**

Vern woke up early on Thursday, Sept. 12th, and woke me up saying we needed to take a ride; he heard water that didn't sound normal. It had been raining all night but we didn't think much about it. We got in the truck and our corner at Black Squirrel and Little Valley was a little washed, no big deal at that point, but the water was just racing down the gully by the motor home, our lower drive, and down the sides of the road. Our basement had several inches of water but we had no wet-dry vac so . . . We thought we would go get the newspaper and see what was happening below, never thinking we would see what we did.

We got to what we all now fondly call "Jack's Crossing" and the road was already impassable. It was 5:30 a.m. We started backing up and Eldon Kifer drove up behind us and into McGibney's driveway to turn around. The road immediately collapsed and sunk the front of his vehicle into the culvert. We drove him back to his house and just waited for sunrise to see what the day would bring. Our next trip down in the truck took us as far as just below the mailboxes, which were still intact, but the road above St. Francis Way was already half gone, enough that we didn't think it would hold, so we headed back up the hill. From that point, things, of course, just escalated. Soon, the corner at Black Squirrel and Little Valley was gone, as well as much of the road all the way to St. Frances Way. Trees and mailboxes in the trench that used to be Little Valley Road were a total shock!

Our story is much like others but it wasn't long before all of the neighbors were walking what used to be our roads, comparing notes and wondering if we were truly isolated. Our phones and cell services were out from Thursday morning early until sometime early Sunday morning, the 15th. Lee and Mare were lifesavers for our community, providing Airbits (internet connection) so we could contact family members and using their home for emergency meetings.

Lee organized groups of us to contact our neighbors to see if anyone needed food, medicines, or help in any way; see who might want to leave or stay when we would eventually get the evacuation notice, and get cell numbers or e-mails for those we didn't have.

A side-note to the water in the basement--we did have a rug shampooer with a gallon tank. At one point, it took 4 seconds to fill the tank and 15 seconds to empty it! Water was flowing in faster that we could possibly get it OUT, so at midnight Thursday night, we just gave up and let it run! We decided since we did have a place to go for the winter, we would be one less car on Little Valley roads, so are now in Apache Junction, Arizona.

**Debora Westley -- Little Valley Road**

We were was astounded when we ventured out to see the devastation left by the flood. Already trying to adjust to the recent loss of Greg, our incredibly faith filled, loving, remarkable, and amazing husband and dad, our family was feeling a bit overwhelmed with the situation. However, the immediate response of neighbors and friends brought a much needed sense of security. We knew we would be alright. People opened their hearts and homes. Compassion, support, and strength - our community at its best! We became a "family" working together for the benefit of all.
Floodpocalypse: The Estes Park flood--our experience from Little Valley
The sound of rain on our roof used to be a comforting sound soothing us to sleep knowing that the dry forest was soaking up the much needed moisture. That all changed for me Wednesday September 11, 2013. It had been raining all week, which was not typical for Colorado. Wednesday night the pounding rain was ferociously loud as it hammered down on our metal roof. The clamor kept me from sleep and naively my biggest worry was that the garage was taking in water. Eventually it was time to quit the game of attempting to sleep and I was up. Yes, mattresses under our climbing wall in the garage were soaking up water that was pouring in and the skylights were beginning to dribble.

Pacing around our kitchen checking social media I started to see how serious this all was. Andy Morgan, the owner of the restaurant where I work--The Dunraven Inn, phoned. “No work tonight. The canyon is closed and Marty (the chef) cannot get to town,” he informed me. He was driving around Estes Park on his way to check on our livelihood, The Dunraven. As he drove he narrated what he was seeing—water everywhere—flowing like a river down Elkhorn Ave (the main street in downtown Estes). Immediately my friends came to mind: Karla who owns Ed’s Cantina located in downtown Estes, and Amy owner of Kind Coffee right next door. Facebook posts let me know they were there saving what they could and sandbagging vigorously with help of friends and family. My thoughts were racing as soon as I got off the phone. I determined to change out of my pjs and go help them. As Andy’s narration continued about the new pond surrounding the fun slide, my husband Adam’s phone rang—I just heard his answer “No there is no other way out. You better just come here.” “What are you talking about” I asked. “Rothner just called—he was camping up in Pierson Park and said he couldn’t get out of Little Valley so I told him to come here,” Adam answered. My conversation with Andy ended quickly, urging him to call me back and let me know how the Dunraven was faring. “What do you mean washed out?” I asked. Andrew Rothner, our friend and employee for Adam’s Tree Service, soon showed up to answer this question himself, “There is water flowing over the road and there is a truck stuck.” Not quite comprehending the severity of what he was saying I went back to social media and checking on my friends who were the folks in real trouble.

Soon we lost power but we were some of the lucky folks who only went without for about an hour or two. The relief to have power restored while being trapped was immense although it was shadowed by the fear that it would be short lived. We decided to get ourselves together and see personally what Little Valley road really looked like. The damage caused by the rain was astonishing and at the time, unknown to us, it was just the beginning. Since Andrew had seen the stuck truck, half of the road that brings us in and out of our neighborhood was gone. The rain that now flowed along the side road for about a half-mile carved a huge ravine. As we walked further the water switched sides of the road creating a riverbed in the middle of the street and another ravine on the opposite side. All of this rainwater merged with what used to be a small creek that flowed under Little Valley Road via a large culvert. This combined surge was too much for the culvert and the water found its way up and over the road. A neighbor, Jack Burns, thought he could drive over this new tributary that flowed across the road but instead wedged his Toyota pickup in between what was left of the asphalt and eroding dirt. The surging river splashed up against the side of the Toyota as he stood on the running board to get a few last things out. Reality was setting in—when I heard a truck was stuck in the road—I imagined someone pulling it out and there would be a way around; however, the edges of the new ravine that
ran along Little Valley Road were still collapsing. Jack’s truck stayed wedged in what use to be the road, the forecast was for more rain, and the loss of the cell networks and internet was all compounding the building emergency. We walked home in shock, still not comprehending how bad it was going to get for us and horrible it might become for others.

We returned to a warm house and a hot shower, which took the sting out of what we just saw. Thank God we have power was all I could think. “We will get out tomorrow Adam assured me,” as I cooked for the boys that were either living in our house or stranded with us including Bryce Klinikowski, Mike Wickwire, Andrew Rothner and a neighbor, Nick Smith. Not knowing what was happening to my friends was constantly on my mind. We ate and drank the night and our worries away and went to sleep to the sound of rain on the roof again.

On Friday the 13th of September we heard many tales from neighbors that Fish Creek Road, the main road that intersects with Little Valley Road, was now a river. I had major doubts that we would get out with two rivers to cross but Adam and the boys were determined. We set out with ropes, pulley, harnesses, rain gear, snacks, water and a set of dry socks stuffed in our backpacks. When we got to Burns Gulch (a newly adopted name for the tributary where Jack Burns got his truck stuck) we saw that it had widened twofold and was now a roaring river. Jack’s truck was flipped and had traveled down stream a ways where it was wedged and filled with mud and rocks. We skirted the ravine that had grown over night as it devoured entire sections of the road and turned into a waterfall feature as it accessed the narrowest part of Burn’s Gulch. We played to our strengths and encouraged Bryce—whom we knew had jumping skills—to take on the roaring gap. He did, vaulting out and landing on the other side with dry feet. Soon the rope was up and we were all across. It felt freeing being on the other side as we turned our backs on Little Valley and headed towards our next obstacle: Fish Creek Road.

Fish Creek Road was now a raging river with chunks of asphalt jutting askew in multiple directions. We were able to skirt this new obstacle and for three and a half miles we zigzagged across and along what was Fish Creek Road. The missing road, exposed power lines, the slabs of displaced asphalt, homes with water charging through them and propane lines severed, gas hissing into the air made it seem as if an earthquake or bombing had occurred. In a daze we made our way into town where civilization seemed to be functioning—cars roaring by, people riding bicycles, and walking dogs. A little further along our journey to procure supplies and hopefully an “outside” vehicle we were asked if we were refugees, which took us a minute to process and answer “yes.” We were given a ride to Liesl’s house, a friend and coworker, who saved us by lending us her van. Overwhelmed with happiness when she opened her door, I had such a hard time explaining to her what we saw and where we just came from because it all seemed so far away. We were so relieved that we did not have to reverse the journey and walk home. In the grocery store, we were totally overwhelmed shopping for ourselves and neighbors. Shockingly there was a lot on the shelves (apparently a Safeway truck that was stocked for four stops was stuck in Estes Park so we got our store’s worth plus what was intended for three others). Safeway was short of the usual things one misses in a disaster: eggs, milk, bread and water. We hit the liquor store after that where my bewilderment got the best of me—I purchased an alcohol free bottle of wine (I did not realize this until the next evening when our neighbor Nick had us over for dinner—I drank half of the alcohol free wine the night before, after I had finished a different bottle of wine—thinking I was exceeding my allotment greatly—I wondered why I felt so good when I woke up that morning).

Thanks to Liesl and her van our journey home was reduced dramatically from six miles to eventually about two or three miles. We crossed a horse meadow and encountered Fish Creek still raging and set up another rope traverse—this time the jump across for Bryce was bigger and his feet got wet. Safe on the other side of one of
our main obstacles we debated the best way through the woods home. I have spent many years living and hiking in Little Valley and was able to navigate us directly to a trail that borders our property. When we hit the trail I felt victorious. Our small mission was complete and soon we would be home—so appreciative that we still had a home after what we saw.

The next few days were a waiting game as we watched more dirt erode away along Little Valley Road leaving a 40 by 100 foot hole at one point. We were beyond extremely fortunate to have a local excavator working on Little Valley Road over the following week, carving a new road out of the sides of peoples properties. Our journey got shorter when the adjacent neighborhood, Rockwood Estates, got access out. Now we just had a half-mile hike along the trail to the house of an amazing family. The Millers helped us get to our refugee van procuring more supplies and they helped us get seven evacuees out with some luggage and a cat. Bits of hope were also accompanied by extremely upsetting news like “the excavators are not coming back,” or “you have ten minutes to evacuate your home for the winter,” “you will not return to your home until after next summer,” and “you will not get your vehicles out until after next summer.” The excavators, Kearney and Sons, did come back and over a week’s time created a road where there was none. Eventually the town of Estes Park decided to help our little neighborhood out and built us a temporary bridge that crossed Fish Creek. The following Thursday after the storm—the 20th of September—I was extremely fortunate to be able to drive to work, which was surreal indeed knowing that the road was gone and then drivable within a weeks time.

Four days later we got cell service back and internet connecting us to friends and family (we did have a neighbor that retained internet service and was generous to share his access). This is when I started to truly realize how fortunate we were. So many had lost everything. Our friends in Glen Haven, Scott and Leah DeCapio, lost their home, studio, car, and shop. Others like Erika (friend and co-worker) were still stranded in their neighborhood, the Retreat, waiting for a Chinook [helicopter] to come get them out. They still can only get to their home by a six mile hike but are hoping to get vehicles out before the winter; however, they will not be able to live in their homes until after next summer— on the bright side—at least they have homes.

We were definitely hit economically as we lost a lot of access to jobs Adam had lined up for the fall. The tourists have not been exactly pouring into town at the typical fall rate. But as the weeks pass and the government shutdown reopened we have had visitors who didn’t cancel their vacations. They drove the long way around (since our major roads are still not open) doing what they could to support the Estes Valley Community. We are fortunate, we had doors to open and people came. Karla and Ed’s and Amy and Kind Coffee will have to wait but they are keeping positive and taking the proper steps to reopen and improve while they have the chance. FEMA and the SBA have been outstanding to everyone I have spoken with during this disaster including ourselves. The community of Estes Park all came together and grew. I am so impressed with so many people witnessing such strength and fortitude in friends, acquaintances and strangers. This was the craziest situation I have ever seen and hope to ever see. I had no clue rain could do so much damage but now I know. I also learned that we all have what it takes to move forward, and I am proud to be part of such a strong community.

Joy Barnett -- Moon Trailway
I had plans to go to Boulder shopping with two girlfriends on September 12th. At 11 PM on the night of Sept 11, we emailed each other and decided we should probably cancel our trip because of the heavy rain. I went to bed and slept soundly until 7:30 AM when my phone rang. It was my brother calling from Arkansas, some
1300 miles away, asking me what was going on. I made the comment to him that it had just rained and rained and we had never seen so much rain. He was watching the national news and asked if I knew our surrounding areas were flooding, to which I answered "no". He told me to go look out the windows, and when I did I said "Oh NO, I've got to go, I'll call you later". I texted other members of our family to tell them what was happening and sent them pictures. We were texting back and forth until 10:30 AM at which time I texted them that the basement was flooding. Immediately after that text, we lost all communication for three days, so their last communication with us was that we were flooding! In the following days, our Little Valley family came together and supported and helped each other. We did what it took to be "mountain strong". And on the 8th day, we were able to get out, thanks to many people working together to repair our roads that had been "decimated," in the words of Sheriff Justin Smith.

Bonnie Beach and Pam Liebing -- Moon Trailway

As the rains started in Estes Park, Pam and I were on the last (and most exciting) leg of a two week trip to Uganda and Rwanda, Africa. On September 11, we stopped in a very small town to use the internet. I broke my wrist on the third day of our trip, and we wanted to email our friend Lee Kenincke to ask if she would make a doctor’s appointment for Monday, September 16. We would not be in the USA until Saturday, September 14. After sending the email, our group made its way to Rwanda’s Parc National des Volcans where, for the next two days we hiked volcanic mountains to spending an hour each day with a group of mountain gorillas. Spectacular.

The evening of September 13, we arrived in Kigali and spent our last night in country in a large, American-style hotel. There, we picked up an email from Lee telling us about the flood. Because no one could get out of Estes Park, a friend who lived in Arvada would pick us up. Everyone was safe, but stranded. Our dog, Lucy was across town with our dog sitter. They were safe and out of harm’s way. The televisions in the hotel lobby were tuned to CNN and ran continual news coverage of the flooding in Colorado. The news showed Boulder, and a bit of Lyons. There was nothing about Estes Park.

We arrived in Denver late Saturday afternoon and got more news from our Arvada friend. After trying to call Lee several times, we finally got through. I had doctor’s appointment on Monday, but Lee said that it might be Tuesday before we could even try to get up to Estes Park. In the mean time we asked Lee to let neighbors know we had some food in our pantry and a full 30 pound bag of dog food. They should take what they needed.

On Tuesday we did come up to Estes Park. We were greeted in Carriage Hills by Brad Barnett, Mike Cossota, Jack Burns, and Jeff Legg, all on ATV's. We were just blown away by the water damage we saw as they drove us into Little Valley. That night we stayed with Lee and Mare. It began to rain again in the early morning and worried that we wouldn’t get our dog, and we wouldn’t be able to get back out of Little Valley, we asked Brad Barnett to take us out. Once out, we collected Lucy and stayed in the home of a friend at the west end of town. Thursday night, Lee called. “They did it. The bridge is in and tomorrow morning, Mare and I can drive our Jeep out to pick you up.” Thanks to all of the amazing work that had been done on our road we were able to pack up some things from our house, fire up our car, and tearfully roll out of Little Valley bound for Illinois. We are so proud of our neighbors and friends. Although we were not able to stay and help out, we left our hearts in Little Valley to friends and neighbors who remained--Mountain Strong.
Boy, do I have a story to tell you. Wednesday the hostess for our opening Bible Study called me and said she was asking all the ladies to give a short talk at our meeting telling what we had done over the summer. Most have gone on nice vacations, had family reunions, and so on. Ralph and I haven't gone anywhere but to our lake house and that trip was uneventful. I racked my brain trying to come up with something interesting and there was nothing. I emailed Jan, my dear lake neighbor, and told her about my dilemma. She said to make our summer sound really interesting, saying we had been to the jungle, got malaria, almost died, and so on. That make me think really hard and I came up with a fictitious trip we took ....a cruise on the Nile River....a trip they might actually buy.

Our meeting began with a pot luck dinner. Everything was good and it was nice to be back together after the summer break. After dinner, sitting around the table, we began to discuss our summer. I volunteered to go first. I said we had flown to Egypt in early June and boarded a cruise ship on The Nile River. The cruise was billed as a Wild Egyptian Safari. Some of the things we learned on that trip was that the Nile flowed from South to North and was 4000 miles long. It started in Egypt and ended in Africa. The early Egyptian calendar was based on the three seasons of the Nile River. These facts are true. I know because I looked them up on Google. The leader of our Bible study is a world traveler and he confirmed my facts.

I had everyone's attention....and they were amazed and very interested in our trip. They asked many questions and I answered them all....length of the cruise, size of the ship, how many passengers. I said parts of the Nile were very modern but other parts were remote and still wild. It was the wild part that was most interesting to us..... crocodiles, fierce natives.

One of our ports of call was in the wild part. Our tour director accompanied us ashore and told us what to expect....he said to stay together because it wasn't safe to be alone. The dark skinned natives were not friendly....they lived in grass huts, had bones in their ears, were half dressed, and spoke only their own language, which sounded like a series of moans and groans and clicks and grunts. We learned about their way of life and their customs. All was interesting. We watched several of their dances but the one that interested us the most was the rain dance. Texas has been in a 5 year drought and any rain would be a blessing.

The natives took all their clothes off, chanted really loud, and danced while looking up and holding their arms up, pleading for rain. I watched very closely and listened hard, determined to learn the rain dance. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could help with the drought?

After we came home, we decided to try the rain dance. We took our clothes off and chanted and danced in our backyard for at least half an hour. With all our trees and the high fence, we weren't seen. Sure enough, it started to rain and continued to rain off and on all summer. Hey, maybe there's something to this after all. (at this point, our Bible study members were looking shocked, but I continued on.)

We decided to try the rain dance at the lake house. The drought there is much worse than it is here. Trees are dying, ranchers are losing cattle, lakes are dry. So, we took our clothes off and then realized we didn't have a good place to dance. From the house to the lake is too steep. From the house to the driveway has sticker burrs. The driveway is pea gravel and would hurt our feet. The only place left was in the street right in front of the house. Now our friends were saying "NO WAY!" "Did you REALLY do that?" They were astonished and were becoming doubtful.
I said we started our nude rain dance, screaming our chants, looking up with our arms up. We only danced for a few minutes when our neighbors demanded that we stop! We were sad because we knew we hadn't danced long enough to end the hill country drought.

Everyone was shocked and speechless at first and then they were all asking if it was true. I looked around at them and said it a bunch of hooey...none of that happened...no flight to Egypt, no cruise, no natives, no rain dance. Nada. Zero. Nothing. The only thing we did was go to the lake house once, with our clothes on!

When the laughing was over, all the ladies got up and cleared the table....without telling their summer stories. Dave, who was sitting to my left, said "Look. They all left because their stories can't equal yours!"

Sandy Burns -- Hummingbird Drive
Some memories regarding the flood:

- Jack’s Toyota pick up truck that brought us out here from California almost 10 years ago…..watching it slowly disappear and disintegrate in the crevice that used to be Little Valley Road.
- Missing fresh produce and then grazing in Melissa Strong’s greenhouse at her invitation.
- Hiking folks out of Little Valley on trails that lead to Cheley Camp
- Resourceful residents using zip lines to cross flooded Fish Creek Road
- Getting into our pantry and freezer to forage; being really happy to have lots of stuff stored away!
- Enjoying Little Valley neighbors’ feasts where we shared food and had some fun (Mayor Pinkham heard of the feasts and commented on them to Senator Udall when he was here viewing the flood damaged areas…..wow, we are famous for our disaster time parties!)
- Hearing that Little Valley made national news on a public broadcast radio station based out of California —because we refused to evacuate! That’s us, Mountain Strong, stubborn and determined!
- Amazing and hardworking Little Valley volunteers who were everywhere and doing everything
- Mike Kearney coming to our rescue and re-building our roads, saving us from evacuation
- Bubba the wild turkey chasing building inspectors down our driveway….they tried to discourage Bubba by waving their clipboards; nothing worked until I heard the commotion and “rescued” the guys. They said they had experienced many animal incidents in their careers, but this was the first watch turkey. Before leaving they took some photos of Bubba! (Bubba was formerly known as Mrs. Turkey until we realized that she was a male…..).
- And lastly and most importantly, the amazing generosity, energy, resourcefulness, courage and kindness of spirit of all Little Valley residents!

Lee Kennicke, LVOA President -- Black Squirrel Drive...6 Weeks After the Crisis
There is a saying: “Adversity does not build character, it reveals character.” After what this community, town, county, and state have experienced, I can only say we are surrounded by some of the most unbelievable people...truly MOUNTAIN STRONG.

I wish when this whole experience started I had been smart enough to journal happenings and thoughts, because the days were certainly filled with many images and exchanges. I have vivid memories of things that happened, people that stepped up, but I cannot begin to remember the exact chronology. I can only say that as a Board we could not be prouder of how our community reacted, pulled together, and were there for the good of everyone. At times when we were all a little scared of what was happening, and the unknown before us, never did we hear
people complain or criticize the way things were progressing...rather it was “what can we do to help,” or “how can we make it easier for ...” or “let’s pull together and get this done.” You are truly an amazing group of individuals and through all of this we have gotten to know our neighbors better and this will only serve to make Little Valley stronger.

There are so many thank you’s that need to be given to so many heroes:
- Mike Kearney stepping in to give us a road and hope, when there was little of either
- The town (Bill Pinkham, Frank Lancaster, Scott Zurn) for getting a bridge built for access to help support and achieve sustainability
- The propane companies for being willing to work with us and keep us in fuel
- Marlin for working to improve our temporary road so it is safer and more “user friendly”
- Our Road Board for working with a variety of entities to get as much done as possible to allow us to continue living here
- Our membership (too numerous to list, and many things I don’t even know about). I wouldn’t want to leave anyone out, but here are some of the acts of kindness that have happened all around us:
  - Zip lining to get to town for supplies when there was no other way out
  - Residents hiking into town day after day to check businesses, check on family and friends
  - Hiking in and out with heavy packs to bring in supplies or to help get people out
  - Trips on ATV’s or Motor Bikes across wet and muddy meadows to
    - get meds
    - bring residents in
    - get gas
    - get food
  - Checking people’s houses who were on the “outside” and couldn’t get in
  - Moving furniture and pulling wet pads and carpets
  - Pulling damaged dry wall and putting up new
  - Lending fans, hoses, wet vats...anything to help the situation at hand
  - Feeding horses and dogs and cats
  - Shoveling dirt, sand and rocks to try to fill in holes wherever possible
  - People on the “outside” offering to bring in whatever was needed, as soon as they could get into town
  - People offering up whatever was in their houses (food, drink, other supplies)
  - People making numerous dump runs to haul destroyed materials out
  - People using the many connections they have throughout town to get things done or questions answered
  - People attending meetings to keep us all informed
  - People offering to pick up things “down in the valley”, group runs
  - Many individuals volunteering to help others in town as soon as they could get out of the “‘hood”

I could go on and on. You have all proven to be an incredible team, doing what you could do to help the situation. You have given one another hope and strength. We know we still have challenges ahead, but to reflect back to six weeks ago...you are truly amazing and of the highest character.
We know there are many that are suffering much worse than any of us and I know we will all continue to reach out and help where possible because Estes Park, Glen Haven, Drake, Pinewood Springs and Lyons WILL be back. We are all MOUNTAIN STRONG.
Dear Mayor Pinkham,

It was only a short time ago that Little Valley faced what seemed like certain evacuation from our homes following the devastating floods in early September. Little Valley residents worked together to quickly address enormous problems, including finding ways to communicate with family and friends, sharing food and fuel, hiking out of our valley to procure supplies, assisting neighbors with a variety of problems and setting up a team to address issues and communicate internally, with everyone. We realized the enormity of the situation with our roads, since they were effectively destroyed by the flood, and there was no way in or out except by hiking and later ATV, so we knew we needed assistance from people in positions of authority.

Despite the fact that your plate was more than full with all of the other flood related crises and problems in the Estes Valley, you responded to our pleas for assistance and early on you appointed points of contact for us with the Town and Larimer County Sheriff, both of whom provided us with avenues to address continuing problems such as security for our neighborhood. Beyond simply providing contact points for us, however, you directly responded and intervened to fix critical problems like the access “bridge” at the bottom of Fish Creek and Little Valley Road and resolution of the propane delivery issue with the County.

The Little Valley Owners’ Association Board of Directors acknowledges and sincerely thanks you on behalf of all of our residents—without your caring and effective leadership, we would most certainly be living outside of our homes this winter. You are an excellent example of what it means to be “Mountain Strong!”

Sincerely,

Little Valley Owners’ Association Board
In early September, historic floods wreaked much destruction in the Estes Valley, including in the Little Valley area where our roads were effectively destroyed. Most of our residents’ homes were intact, but the road damage led officials to instruct us to evacuate. As you know, most of us elected to stay in our homes, and we worked together as a community to address critical problems as best as we could. In some instances, however, we needed others in positions of authority to help. Mayor Bill Pinkham advised that we establish contact with you and your department. We did so, and we have been very fortunate to benefit from the services of Corporal Troy Badberg.

Early on one of our critical concerns was that of security, since the disaster presented an opportunity for looters and others who had no business being in our neighborhoods to cause problems. Also we were working with the USFS to close down the entrance to Roosevelt National Forest Pierson Park, but that did not happen immediately. Corporal Badberg quickly established a strong presence here, posted a Larimer County Sheriff restricted access sign, and began daily patrols. He has been a pleasure to work with, and we have greatly appreciated the very real sense of security that he and his officers have provided for us. He also has made it a point to keep in touch with us, so that we are all on the same page. This is all the more amazing given what must be many other competing priorities, especially at this time!

Thank you very much from the Little Valley Owners’ Association Board of Directors on behalf of Little Valley residents for the work that Troy has done to make our community safe and livable during these challenging and unprecedented times.

Sincerely,

Little Valley Owners’ Association Board
Dear Frank,

Shortly after the devastating floods in early September, Little Valley residents faced enormous problems including certain evacuation in the face of the tremendous damage to our roads. We are a close knit community, so we pulled together and quickly assembled teams to address the immediate problems. However, we found there were some problems that we simply could not remedy on our own, so we turned to you and Mayor Pinkham for assistance. Despite all of the other issues you and your staff were handling related to this historic disaster, you still found the time to respond to, and even more, to fix one of the most critical problems that we faced—propane delivery. Since the suppliers had been told that they could not bring their delivery trucks into Little Valley, we faced an impossible situation given that all homes are supplied by propane. We are also aware that your staff made it a priority to construct a new entrance bridge and road into Little Valley since the Fish Creek/Little Valley Road intersection was totally destroyed. Between the work that your engineers performed and Mike Kearney, our residents feel very fortunate indeed that our access problem was remedied, particularly since these roads are outside of the Town boundary. You will be pleased to know that with the continuing work that is being accomplished on our roads, we have confidence that we can survive the winter in our homes. Next summer, the permanent repair work will begin!

Frank, thank you very much on behalf of the Little Valley Owners’ Association Board of Directors and all Little Valley residents for your effective and rapid response to our request for help—it seems that you accepted the job as Town Administrator just in time for the Town of Estes and for Little Valley as well!

Sincerely,

Little Valley Owners’ Association Board
Dear Scott,

Little Valley has a reputation for proactive responses to problems and issues, of which you are aware given our beetle and fire mitigation programs. However, we faced a new and much more devastating situation in the aftermath of the damaging and historic floods in early September. Most of our residents’ homes were not damaged, so we were very fortunate in comparison to others in the canyons. Our roads were a different story, since entry and exit from Little Valley was impossible given the total destruction of the Fish Creek/Little Valley Road area and damage to many of our upper roads. We know of the influence you brought to bear and of the work that you did to provide our residents with a new entrance point and “bridge.” Later, when an equally important issue arose with the propane delivery issue, you, Frank Lancaster and Mayor Pinkham worked to resolve this problem in our favor. We now have the opportunity to stay in our homes for the winter rather than face certain evacuation. Thank you on behalf of the Little Valley Owners’ Association Board and all Little Valley residents—Estes Park and Little Valley are very fortunate benefit from your competent and effective leadership!

Sincerely,

Little Valley Owners’ Association Board
Marlin Godfrey, Bladeworks
October 28, 2013

Dear Marlin,

The last six weeks have definitely been a “test of patience” as we all watched inches of rain fall for days on end. And then, we all watched our beautiful road wash away and suddenly we were stranded. We can only imagine how difficult it had to be for you to watch your hard work over the last few years, crumble away under the force of nature.

As an Association we are very thankful for you and the work you have done over the last few years, as we believe things could have been much worse. The work you did in trying to keep culverts cleaned out, crowning the road so we didn’t have washes down the middle...those all did matter in the end, even though we lost huge portions of the road you helped to lessen that damage.

In addition, as soon as the rain stopped, you were there to offer your assistance in whatever way you could. We recognize there were “hoops to jump through” and the typical “channels to negotiate” with the county, but you were there waiting in the wings to help.

We so appreciate what you have done to help make the road more solid and safer for us as we head into the winter. We know, given the condition of the temporary road, that this is not an easy task. You have given us hope that we can sustain here through the winter months, until we can get a more permanent fix and we thank you for helping to give us that hope.

As an Association we give you this gift certificate as a small token of our appreciation, not only for what you have done in the last couple of weeks, but for what you have done over the last few years. We appreciate you and your approach to keeping our roads in good shape...and always with a smile on your face.

With heartfelt thanks,

Little Valley Owner’s Association
Kearney & Sons Excavating  
October 28, 2013

Dear Mike,

It is hard to believe that is was six weeks ago that we were being deluged by inches of rain and we all watched our roads being washed away to places far below. As an Association (LVOA) we were unsure of what our next step(s) would be, as at times it seemed we would have no choice but to be evacuated. In times of crises there are always people that rise to the occasion and do things for the betterment of the whole.

And...along came our hero, Mike! Suddenly word spread that Mike Kearney was trying to mitigate the damage enough to provide us a way to get out and there you were. It was unbelievable to watch you craft a road out of nothing and it was even more unbelievable to witness how rapidly it was done.

As an Association we just want to say THANK YOU. Thank you for being there for us, for working many long hours and for making lemonade out of lemons. We have all come to realize that if it hadn’t been for you we would have had to leave our homes with what we could fit in a backpack and have no idea of when we could return. We also know that you came to our rescue on your own free will, not even knowing how everything would shake down from the PID. I cannot tell you how often it has come up in conversation with people saying, “If it weren’t for Mike Kearney....” We want you to know that the “Thank You’s” come with a great deal of gratitude and that it cannot begin to say to you how appreciative we all are for your unselfish “act of kindness.”

We give you this gift certificate as a small token of our appreciation and hope that you can go out and enjoy a couple of good dinners on us. You have given us all the opportunity to stay in our homes and we appreciate even more the community that surrounds us.

With heartfelt thanks,

Little Valley Owner’s Association
Estes Park town hall will filled to overflowing Sunday for the morning update by officials on the flooding situation. The overflow was sent next door to the library where the information was streamed live to the library’s big screen. (John Cordsen)

Editor’s note: The following information was presented at the 10 a.m. briefing today at Estes Park Town Hall. However, many people were having trouble watching the briefing being streamed online at estes.org/videos or on cable channel 12. This is a summary of what was said. All information is from town officials.
Estes Park Town Administrator Frank Lancaster said during today’s daily briefing that agencies continue to focus on life safety priorities and assessing conditions related to public safety as well as public resources as it relates to the ongoing flash flooding situation. Long-term recovery plans are already underway, he said. Lancaster said Estes Park is a resilient community and that the town is up to the challenge of recovery. He also said as much as the town would like to welcome visitors to the community, this is not the time to visit Estes Park because the community infrastructure has been compromised and resources must be focused on response and recovery to this disaster. No significant injuries or missing people have been reported in the Estes Valley at this time. Other key information:

**EVACUATION AREAS AND CENTERS**
- All residents east of Fish Creek Road from U.S. 36 to Cheley Camp should absolutely NOT attempt to cross Fish Creek Road by foot or vehicle. It is extremely unsafe and unstable. Shelter in place unless you are directly contacted by emergency personnel to assist you with evacuation.
- Low-lying properties along all of Fish Creek Road were directly contacted or evacuated yesterday. All other properties further east from the road including Dunraven Heights, Windham Lane, Johnson Lane and adjacent roads, the Uplands, Little Valley and Rockwood Estates and others are being contacted at home continuing today by emergency services personnel to assess special needs and assist in evacuations. Residents should prepare to evacuate for what may be an extended period of time, as road and infrastructure repairs could take several months. Currently working in Little Valley and Rockwood estates on ATVs and UTVs. Supplies and provisions, establishment of a footpath out cannot be a priority for emergency services. Residents must understand that with winter weather impending, staying at home in this area is an extremely dangerous decision and emergency services will not be available to them after evacuation.
- In addition to the Fish Creek area, other evacuation areas include low-lying properties around all rivers from the U.S. 34/36 intersection west through town and west down the Big Thompson and Fall Rivers in Estes Park. Also evacuated is the Highway 66 corridor beyond Aspen Brook/Dunraven Inn.
- Evacuate if you feel unsafe, move to a safe location. Neighbors must help one another.
- All low-lying property residents should be alert to changes in water levels.
- **UPDATE ON SHELTER:** We apologize for the continued changes. Evacuees should continue to use Mountain View Bible Fellowship on Highway 7 for meals and sheltering. The Estes Park Conference Center at 101 South Saint Vrain Avenue will be used for overflow. Information updates, phones, television and internet will be available at the Conference Center for evacuees.
- Large animals should go to the Fairgrounds at Stanley Park and small animals to Animal Medical Center.

**IF YOU WANT TO HELP**
- A special flood relief fund is now set up through Crossroads Ministry to receive and disperse funds for local flood victims. Visit [www.crossroadsofEP.org](http://www.crossroadsofEP.org) to donate; designate donation for flood relief.
- Volunteer and other assistance offers may be sent to info@estes.org. We are compiling this information for use when needs are organized.
RESOURCES
  o The Town is working with other agencies and local businesses to evaluate public resources including fuel and food. Both fuel and food deliveries are incoming.
  o Pet and livestock feed is available at Estes Park Pet Supply.

BUILDING SAFETY: RE-ENTRY CAUTION
  o Even if you do not see water damage and structural problems, it can still be there. It is critical for your safety that you not attempt to reenter evacuated areas without further information. This will be provided as it becomes available.
  o Rapid assessment teams are already reviewing structure conditions along the flood plain downtown. Please wait for further information and do not risk your safety by entering those structures. The south side assessment of Elkhorn should be complete Monday, then teams will start assessing structures on the North side. Placards posted on doors will indicate the safety of the assessed structures. Police will ultimately allow access back to the area before anyone should try to access the structures.
  o Additional technical assistance is arriving to assist in these efforts.
  o Once evacuees are able to return to homes and businesses, they should read safety and recovery resources available on www.estes.org and www.larimer.org/health/emergency/
  o The Town’s dedicated line for building safety inspection information is 970-577-3722.

FIND PEOPLE
  o The American Red Cross Safe and Well website should be used to find someone or post information about your location for your family and friends. Visit www.safeandwell.org. Due to extreme volume of requests, responding agencies and the local Red Cross volunteers cannot manage this and ask that citizens use this website to contact one another. Register today!
  o Do not call the evacuation centers as facility phones are not public lines and evacuation center staff is limited to a degree that they cannot add this to their responsibilities.

SCHOOLS
  o Estes Park Schools will open next week as usual but will not hold classes. Students may be taken to the school for care and feeding during the days. They are not required to attend but the schools want to be available as a resource. Buses will not run.

TRAVEL
  o Highways U.S. 34, U.S. 36, C.R. 43 are closed by the managing agencies.
  o Free shuttle service to Embassy Suites at Denver International Airport is available. Visitors who need transportation out of town should visit the Mountain View Bible evacuation center to sign up before 11 a.m. Sunday for the shuttle leaving approximately 2 p.m. Sunday. Sign up by 11 a.m. Monday for the 2 p.m. Monday shuttle.
  o Trail Ridge Road/RMNP. The National Park Service confirms that Trail Ridge Road is currently open through RMNP for essential traffic. Eastbound traffic will only consist of community residents, family members of community residents providing support, emergency services and delivery trucks. Estes Park community’s infrastructure is overwhelmed due to the magnitude of this historic flood event. The limited resources must be focused on response and recovery. No visitors to the area will be allowed to travel east bound on Trail Ridge Road to Estes Park, even those with advance plans and reservations in the community. 90-feet is the vehicle length limit. No weight limit. The Park is otherwise closed to the public.
Colorado Highway 7. Highway 7 access is restricted to local residents for essential needs, emergency services and deliveries, as well as visitors exiting Estes Park. Those visitors will not be allowed to return during these conditions. Emergency personnel, residents of Estes Park, delivery vehicles and other essential visitors will be able to access Estes Park by taking State Highway (SH) 119 north from the Blackhawk/Central City area to Nederland to SH 72 north through Ward to SH 7 and then north to Estes Park through Allenspark. CDOT has checkpoints at varying locations along the highway to ensure that only those with critical missions can enter and exit the town until more permanent repairs can be made.

Just because water recedes doesn’t mean roads and bridges are safe. After flooding, infrastructure can be compromised and structures may fail. Restrict travel to necessity.

Town’s free shuttle system has ceased operations for the season.

WATER
- There are no current boil orders for Estes Park. The boil order was lifted for the neighborhoods around Fish Creek that previously received the order from our staff.
- Some properties from Sketchbox Lane to the Uplands subdivision will continue to be without water until that can be restored. Maps of this area are available at www.facebook.com/townofestesparkco
- Creekside north to Sketchbox remains off. Other areas restored.
- The Water Division is taking quality samples throughout Town to ensure water quality and safety.
- The bulk water dispenser is available on Fourth Street.

PUBLIC WORKS
- Public Works crews are working around the clock to evaluate and clear public infrastructure.
- Many roads have suffered severe damage. Engineering efforts currently include where and how to create temporary bridges and egress for the affected areas before winter so that we can provide as much access as possible.
- Sand bag materials are no longer available to the public.

SANITATION
- Sanitation plants were compromised and crews continue working to repair sanitary sewer lines. Most damaged is the Fish Creek corridor.
- The Upper Thompson Sanitation District plant is now running and effluent to river is good.
- Please conserve sewage and restrict what you send down the drain.
- Waste Management is providing roll-offs for conservative public use at the Estes Park Visitor Center, Estes Park Marina, Fairgrounds Park-n-Ride off Manford Avenue, and Carriage Drive at Highway 7. No slash or commercial waste can be accepted, residential only as space is extremely limited. Waste Management will strive to empty these receptacles as much as possible while the Transfer Station is closed and Waste Management pick-up service is suspended. They are working to restore transport of waste starting Monday.

LIGHT AND POWER
- Crews are responding to power outages as quickly as possible. Power outages should be reported to 970-586-5335.
- Estes Park Light & Power has kept power off to part of the U.S. 34 canyon, Glen Haven and CR 43 to Drake due to infrastructure damage. However, crews reenergized power lines in the
U.S. 34 canyon to approximately Seven Pines. Outages in Windcliff and Carriage Hills were restored. They are now focused on assessing Glen Haven to restore power where possible.

**PHONES, INTERNET AND CABLE**
- Baja Broadband estimates it is 90 percent repaired and continues working to restore service.
- AT&T, Verizon and T-Mobile are restored to limited capacity. Please restrict use to necessity -- text data will be best to ensure towers can accommodate use. Do not send videos or photos. This is critical for emergency services’ ability to use the service.
- Century Link is also working to evaluate and restore the landline phone service in Estes Park. Landline 9-1-1 has been restored locally, so working landlines should be able to call 9-1-1.
- Airbits is providing free public WiFi at Stanley Village, Appenzell Inn on Big Thompson Ave., Mountain View Bible/Evac Center, and downtown. No Password required. Summitview Coffee on Moraine is also providing free wi-fi at their location as are many other businesses. The Town has free WiFi at Town Hall and the Estes Park Visitor Center. Computers and internet are available at the Estes Valley Library.

**GENERAL**
- Please check on your neighbors as we are unable to do welfare checks with limited staff and resources.
- Stay out of flood water – it can be contaminated with sewage.
- Stay current on your tetanus shot. Family Medical Clinic at EPMC is available during business hours.
- **DO NOT DRIVE THROUGH WATER OR PASS ROAD BLOCKS** – You are putting your life and those of emergency responders at risk if you do.
- If you feel unsafe at your home, trust your instincts and go to the shelter.
- Hazardous road conditions still exist in Estes Park -- limit travel.
- All residents in low-lying areas are asked to be on alert for rising water. Be prepared to evacuate if needed.
- The Estes Park Town Board met at noon Sept 12. to ratify a disaster declaration for Estes Park.
- The Bureau of Reclamation reports that dams are safe, both Olympus and Mary’s Lake are holding up well.
- We cannot provide water damage information for specific addresses. Please be patient. There is also no estimate for repairs to roads at this time.
- The Town is working on gathering information on available resources and planning for extensive recovery efforts.

**COMMUNITY MEETINGS**
- Evacuee Meeting will be at 1 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 15 at Mountain View Bible Fellowship at Peakview Drive and Highway 7. Evacuees are encouraged to attend this meeting rather than the 10 a.m. meeting as more specific needs will be covered.
- The next Community Meeting will be at 10 a.m. Monday, Sept. 15 at the Town Hall Board Room. Spanish translation will be available at this meeting. This meeting will be streamed live at www.estes.org/videos and viewers may send questions to info@estes.org. Overflow attendees will be asked to watch the meeting at the Estes Valley Library. We will answer as many questions as possible that benefit the audience overall. Specific questions will be answered by
email. Past meetings are being replayed throughout the day and posted for watching later at www.estes.org/videos. Members of the media are encouraged to use and air this video feed to help us share information.

MORE INFORMATION SOURCES
- Sign up to receive emergency notifications on your cell phone and email at leta911.org. Email may be a good option right now with phone difficulties.
- Town’s information/call center provides recorded information and live staff at 970-577-3716. (Sunday staffed hours are 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.)
- Information updates available at www.facebook.com/townofestesparkco and www.twitter.com/townofestespark
- Information updates will also be posted at Town Hall west entrance to board room, Estes Park Visitor Center, National Park Village at Beaver Point, and the evacuation center at Mountain View Bible Fellowship.
- Spanish-language materials are being posted daily to www.facebook.com/townofestesparkco as well as posted at the above locations.
- For information regarding flooding in Larimer County (including Pinewood Springs, Big Thompson Canyon and Glen Haven) you must call 970-498-5500. Visit www.larimer.org and follow them at www.twitter.com/LarimerCounty
- Contact Boulder County Emergency Management for issues along Highway 7 outside Estes Park including those related to Allenspark. Please call 303-441-3390.
- Town facilities are closed to the public this weekend other than public meetings.

Continue to follow this ongoing story on our Facebook page and online at www.eptrail.com
Appendix C
Little Valley: The Flood, 2013
Images

Much of what happened during the initial days of rain and flooding passed in confusion, concern, fear, and then determination. Images from the flood that appear on the following pages were submitted by residents. The images came in haphazardly and were published on our website in the same way. It is impossible to identify every image with the correct photographer. Then as now, the idea was to publish pictures so that residents and their families could see what was going on in the neighborhood and the extent of the damage. Therefore, with sincere apologies to those whose names are left out (several, I am sure), here is a partial list of contributing photographers: K. Baker, J. Barnett, M. Bradley, S. Bryan, S. Burns, A. Cossota, K. Dougherty, L. Ferguson, L. Kennicke, S. Magnusson, J. McGill, M. Oepping, M. Strong. Thanks to everyone...named and unnamed.

It Begins...

LVOA President Lee Kennicke looking at initial flooding on Black Squirrel.

She is soon joined by neighbors. This looks very serious.
A confluence of disaster--Junction LittleValley Rd and Black Squirrel.

Little Valley Road

Upper Mail Boxes

New waterfalls appear ... and the road gives way under Jack Burns’ truck
By day two, there was no hope for the truck

Car parked on Little Valley Road

New “water features” develop everywhere

No way out, so Adam and Melissa Strong, with a little help from their friends, put in a zip line

It Works!
And soon there are other ways to get in and out of Little Valley

Once out, we begin to see the extensive damage caused by the flood.
Looking southward on Fish Creek Rd.

Highway 36 (r) and Highway 34 (l)
When the rains quit and residents determine they would not evacuate ("Hell No! We won’t go!")), the signs of recovery were everywhere.

Stop sign graffiti at the junction of Little Valley and Fish Creek.

Absolutely!

Faith in the future...
two of the Westley kids show their Halloween costumes!