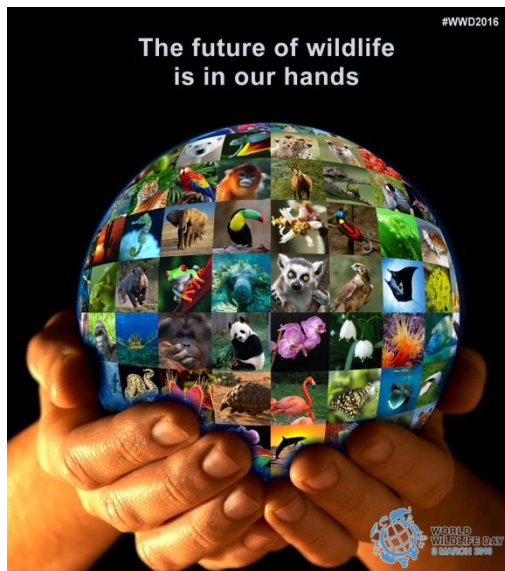


Conservation Conversations

A Month of Celebration

We've all heard the old proverb, "March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb." The proverb would suggest that March is a month of celebration because it's a sign of change and that spring is coming. However, did you also know that the United Nations officially celebrates 15 different International Days in the month of March? For example, the United Nations understands the "relevance of happiness and well-being as universal goals and aspirations in the lives of human beings around the world." As such, they recognize March 20th as the **International Day of Happiness**. Additionally, four other March dates celebrate nature, wildlife, and conservation.

March 3rd is **World Wildlife Day**. According to the United Nations, "World Wildlife Day is an opportunity to celebrate the many beautiful and varied forms of wild fauna and flora. At the same time, the Day reminds us of the urgent need to step up the fight against wildlife crime, which has wide-ranging economic, environmental and social impacts. Wildlife has an intrinsic value and contributes to the ecological, genetic, social, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, recreational and aesthetic aspects of sustainable development and human well-being." The World Wildlife Day theme for 2016 is "the future of wildlife is in our hands." We are fortunate to live in Grand County and be surrounded nature and wildlife. Today would be a day to appreciate the natural world we live in and the many ways nature and wildlife help sustain the economy of Grand County. <http://www.wildlifeday.org/>



**WORLD
WILDLIFE DAY
3 MARCH**

March 21st is **International Day of Forests**. Forests are home to 80% of the terrestrial species on Earth and support the livelihoods of approximately 20% the world's population. Healthy forests also help stabilize soil, prevent floods and mudslides, clean and filter water, and renew underground aquifers. In fact, according to the United Nations, forests supply 75% of freshwater worldwide. Additionally, forest ecosystems play a critical role in climate change by absorbing carbon dioxide and acting as a carbon sink. For these reasons, the United Nations uses this day as a platform to celebrate forest ecosystems and raise awareness on risks and detriments of deforestation. This year's theme for International Day of Forests is "Forests and Water". Locally, 50% of the land area in Grand County is covered by evergreen and deciduous forests. Today would be a day to think about the value that forests in Grand County provide to the wildlife, residents, and watershed as a whole.

<http://www.fao.org/forestry/international-day-of-forests/en/>



**21 March
International Day of Forests**

March 22nd is **World Water Day**. We all know that life without water cannot exist, but besides its obvious life or death value, water is also vital to economic development and environmental stability. The United Nations has announced that “World Water Day is a day to celebrate water. It’s a day to make a difference for the members of the global population who suffer from water related issues. It’s a day to prepare for how we manage water in the future.” The 2016 theme for World Water Day is “Water and Jobs”. Water is obviously a hot topic in Grand County and Colorado in general. Being at the headwaters of the Colorado and Fraser Rivers, we live in a unique location and the water here is very valuable. Only time will tell what will happen to our water, but today would be the day to appreciate the water we have now and the economic and recreational opportunities it provides.

<http://www.unwater.org/worldwaterday/home/en/>



March 23rd is **World Meteorological Day**. This day celebrates the organization of the World Meteorological Organization and its contributions to the safety and wellbeing of humanity. It’s through organization’s international meteorological station networks that they are able to help protect life and property from natural disasters. The 2016 theme for World Meteorological Day is “Hotter. Drier. Wetter. Face the future.” Everyone knows that if you don’t like the weather in Colorado, wait 10 minutes, it’ll likely change. Today would be the day to remember the power of Mother Nature, appreciate the meteorological stations that keep us abreast on the future forecast, and take a moment to consider how the climate has changed and is continuing to change.

<http://www.wmo.int/worldmetday/>



I hope these International Days of Celebration inspire you to think more about the natural world and how lucky we are to live here in Middle Park.