

# NEWSLETTER

# ALTA ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

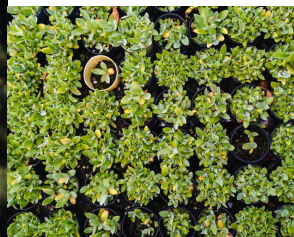
MAY 2020 | SPRING | ISSUE NO 95



## Shoutout to the Alta Environmental Center Summer Team

The snow is melting and the creeks are flowing atop Little Cottonwood Canyon, signs that summer season at Alta is approaching. While most think of winter when they think about Alta Ski Area, the Alta Environmental Center (AEC) is gearing up for its busy summer season. As plans for plantings, invasive plant surveys and treatment, revegetation and restoration work, and trail work come together, we wanted to take the opportunity to give a shoutout to two key people who join the AEC team in the summer and are essential to the AEC's continued success.

Coleman Worthen has been at Alta Ski Area since 2005, and has been a member of the Alta Ski Patrol since 2008, and transitions into the AEC's Conservation Coordinator position in the summer and fall season. Summer 2020 marks Coleman's fourth summer with the AEC. Coleman brings a wealth of knowledge in trail building and management to the AEC team, and is the AEC's point person on all things trails. Having worked for the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation and on Forest Service trail systems in the past, Coleman has a deep understanding of sustainable trail design and is committed to maintaining and bettering the trail system within Alta Ski Area. Coleman has also built extensive knowledge in land conservation and vegetation management at Alta and, given his winter job, he knows the mountain like the back of his hand whether its covered in snow or covered in wildflowers.



Coleman Worthen

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Cassin's Finch

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## AEC Summer Team cont'd

Andy Gishen

Andy Gishen is the manager of the Alta Ski Area Parking Department when the snow is flying in the winter and has worked at Alta Ski Area since 1999. Andy joined the AEC team in summer 2019 - but you wouldn't even know it! Andy is as sharp as they come, has caught on quickly, and has really taken ownership of several AEC land conservation efforts, including general revegetation efforts, restoration plantings and restoration monitoring efforts, plant identification, invasive plant surveys and treatments, and native seed gathering for growing seedlings. It is clear that Andy takes pride in his work and is committed to taking care of the land within the ski area, and we are excited for Andy to be part of the AEC team again this summer.



Overall, the AEC works as a team and we help each other out where needed, and even receive help from other Alta Ski Area departments in the summer. Overall sustainability, including land conservation efforts, is a collective effort at Alta Ski Area, and the Alta Environmental Center appreciates the support from the ski area as a whole in staying on top of our busy summer schedule and continuing to advocate for a sustainable Alta.



## Natures Nugget: Cassin's Finch

Meet the Cassin's Finch, *Haemorhous cassinii*, one of the many bird species that calls Alta home. This small to medium-sized bird is about six inches tall. Males can be spotted by their bright red forehead, (pictured). The female Cassin's Finch is more brown in color overall without the bright red forehead, and has a slight yellow color on its cheek and wings. Walking around Alta, you can most commonly find these birds in Douglas fir and spruce trees. The Cassin's Finch birds can be found cracking seeds from pine trees and forbs or enjoying a tasty insect. Remember to leave no trace and don't feed or disturb the birds.



## Enjoying Nature & Being Socially Responsible

Nature is unaffected by the pandemic and continues on as spring blooms, and Mother Nature awakens after the winter. There is a healing power that nature brings. As the days become warmer and the sun shines brighter and longer, venturing into the outdoors or into the mountains looks a little different these days with social distancing. We are lucky to live in a state with a vast amount of public lands and recreational opportunities for our enjoyment. With a little mindfulness, it is possible to still recreate responsibly during these times. Strategies include avoiding crowds and crowded trailheads. This could be an opportunity to discover new trails that are not busy, out of the way, and visited less frequently by others. Remember to keep 6 feet of distance between yourself and others. Regardless of social distancing requirements, please always be sure to recreate in nature responsibly by adhering to the Leave No Trace principles. We look forward to seeing you on the mountain this summer, from a distance.

*The environment is where we all meet; where all have a mutual interest;  
it is the one thing all of us share.*

*-Lady Bird Johnson*