



HIGH COUNTRY
CONSERVATION CENTER

2021 **ANNUAL
REPORT**



FROM OUR DIRECTOR



Dear HC3 Supporters,

Climate change is increasingly harder to ignore, even in Summit County. Last summer, we faced record-breaking heat, smoke-filled skies, and unprecedented shortages in the reservoirs along the Colorado River. Current research projects that our summers will continue to heat up while our winter season – and the economic impact it drives – will continue shrinking.

Meanwhile, lack of recycling and overconsumption are creating global plastic pollution. Microplastics have been found across the Earth – from the deep ocean to the farthest reaches of Rocky Mountain National Park and even in newborn babies.

Fortunately, HC3 is working locally to solve these global problems. We help our community reduce carbon pollution, save energy and take advantage of Colorado's sunshine to generate solar power. And our zero waste initiatives encourage residents and visitors to generate less trash, while recycling and composting more.

We are excited to share our 2021 accomplishments in this report. Thank you to our partners and donors for supporting our work to build a more sustainable Summit County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J Schenk". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jennifer Schenk
Executive Director, HC3

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VISION

Creating a healthy planet through local action

MISSION

*Promote practical solutions for resource
conservation in our mountain community*

CLIMATE ACTION



"We love our solar panels. Our electricity is basically free now."

—JEFF & MOLLY EDWARDS

LEADING OUR COMMUNITY IN ACTION

Climate change isn't just a global problem. From declining snowpack and increased risk of wildfire to persistent drought, we all have a stake in this fight. Our community goal is to reduce emissions 80% by 2050.

SOLARIZE SUMMIT

Solarize Summit empowers residents to take action on climate change by making it easy and affordable to generate clean, renewable electricity at home. Over 50 systems were installed in 2021, bringing our 3-year total to 160 households.



52 PARTICIPANTS



**395 KILOWATS
Solar Installed**

ELECTRIC VEHICLE EDUCATION

What's it like driving an electric car? Just like a gas-powered car, only quieter and cleaner. To help locals understand the perks of driving electric, we hosted an electric car event with several vehicles to test drive, and over 100 people attended.

With gas prices increasing, driving electric makes economic sense. Here's the cost of driving 100 miles in Colorado in 2021:

 **\$3 EV**

 **\$15 GAS-POWERED CAR**

FINDING COMMON GROUND

HC3 can't fight climate change on its own. It takes all of us working together to make a difference and inspire visitors to our community to do the same. In October, we partnered with Protect Our Winters to host professional snowboarder and POW-founder Jeremy Jones for a film screening and audience conversation. Over 500 people attended, many of whom were not previously engaged with HC3.



"We love our EV! It has exceeded our expectations. It gets really good range, even though it's cold here, and the AWD handles well on snow."

— BRODIE BOILARD



ENERGY CONSERVATION

"The Energy Smart program is an excellent opportunity. My auditor was super easy to work with, and the whole process was painless."

—JANICE GODARD



HELPING YOU MAXIMIZE COMFORT AND EFFICIENCY

HC3's Energy Smart Colorado program makes it easy for residents to save energy. Not only does energy efficiency help us meet our climate action goals, it also makes homes more comfortable – and affordable – to live in.

224 HOME ENERGY ASSESSMENTS

\$375 AVERAGE ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD SAVINGS

56 HOME ENERGY UPGRADES

827 LED BULBS TO HOMEOWNERS

ENERGY SMART PROJECT

When Breckenridge homeowner Janice noticed that her kitchen was always cold, she knew her home could use a little energy efficiency TLC. After getting an assessment, Janice decided to increase the insulation in her crawl space. With rebates from HC3 and Xcel Energy, her project cost was reduced by 50%.

\$1,764 TOTAL COST

\$400 ENERGY SMART REBATE

\$1,364 NET COST

\$365 ANNUAL ENERGY BILL SAVINGS

WATER CONSERVATION



Local water resources are expected to see a major gap between supplies and demands by 2050.

THE VALUE OF WATER

The Blue River flows downstream into the mighty Colorado River, which provides drinking water to nearly 40 million people. And, the impacts of climate change are stressing local rivers. HC3 helps residents and visitors understand the value of our precious water resources.

TAME THE TAP

In partnership with local water utilities, HC3 teaches residents how and why to save water in their homes. Check-ups include leak detection, on-the-spot quick fixes and water education.



**23 HOMES
INSPECTED**



**95,499 GALLONS
SAVED**

WASTE REDUCTION



DOUBLING RECYCLING BY 2035

While our landfill diversion rate was 20% in 2021 – meaning that 80% of our waste is being trashed – HC3 is driving new programs and creative outreach to increase local recycling and composting.

RECYCLING SUCCESS

In 2021, the county's newest recycling programs thrived. It's all thanks to Strong Future, a ballot measure approved by voters in 2018.

The food scrap drop-off program, mattress recycling, and neighborhood glass stations made it easier than ever for residents to trash less and recycle more.



69% INCREASE
in glass diverted from
the landfill



9% INCREASE
in food waste
composted by residents



14% INCREASE
in mattresses diverted
from the landfill

CLEANING UP LOCAL RECYCLING

Recycling rules are different everywhere. HC3 eliminates the guesswork, helping residents, visitors and businesses recycle the right way.



585 RECYCLING BINS
tagged with personalized tips



573 LOCAL RECYCLERS
educated at 3 drop-off centers

BUSINESSES GO ZERO WASTE

HC3 works closely with local restaurants and homeowners' associations to add or improve recycling. Many residential buildings received new recycling signs and labels, along with hands-on guidance and grant funds, to ensure that residents and visitors are recycling the right way.



62 BUSINESSES
supported with
personalized assistance



25 RESTAURANTS
started new glass and/or
food waste programs



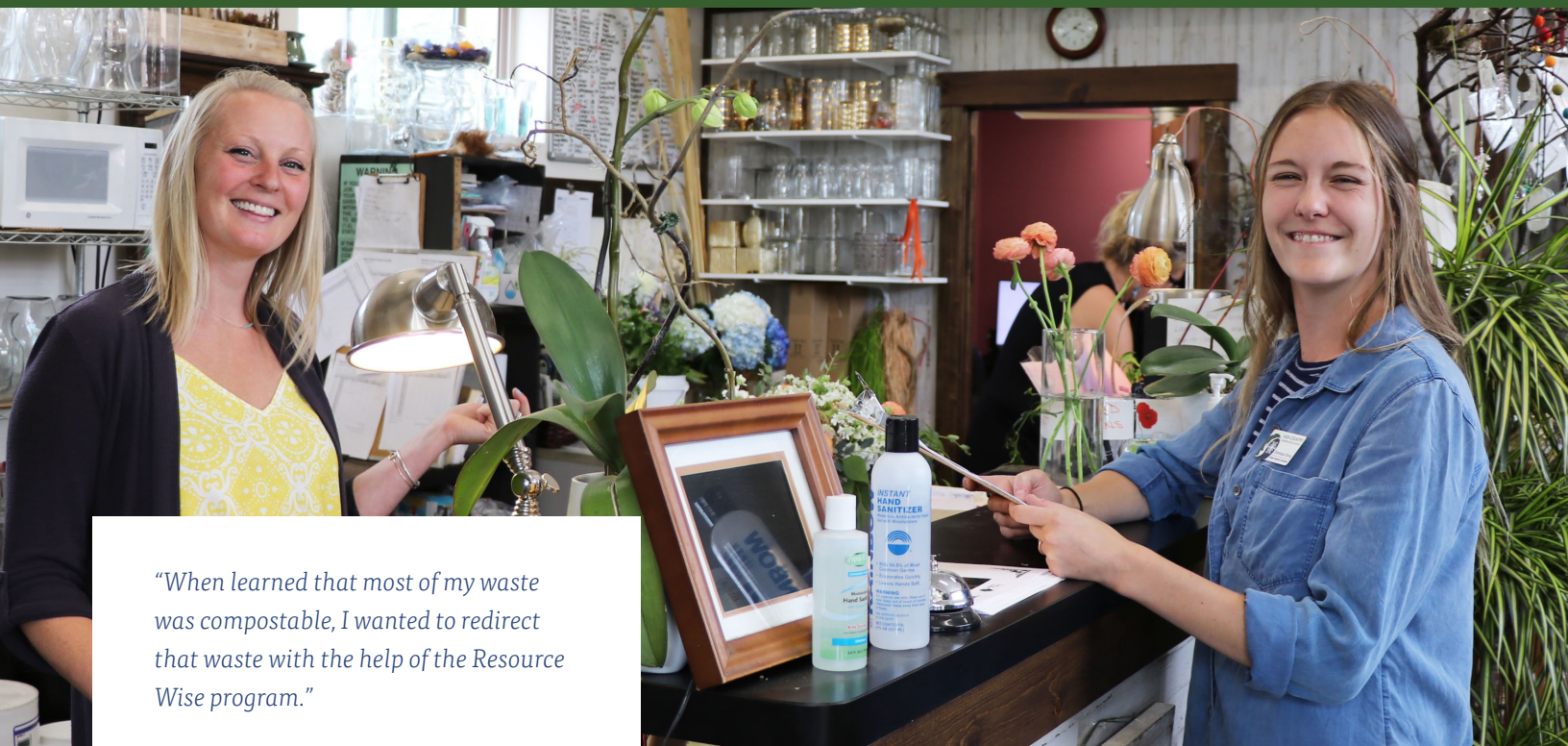
11 COMMUNITY GRANTS
distributed to improve recycling



The Pad is one of 25 local businesses that started new glass and/or food scrap recycling program with support from HC3.



RESOURCE WISE



"When learned that most of my waste was compostable, I wanted to redirect that waste with the help of the Resource Wise program."

—CARLA PETTIT, OWNER, GARDEN OF EDEN

MAKING THE BUSINESS CASE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Local businesses are the backbone of our economy, but they also account for half of our energy use and much of our waste. Through Resource Wise certification, businesses become more sustainable, setting an example for visitors and helping to preserve our mountain home.

22 NEW BUSINESSES

**\$875 AVERAGE SAVINGS
PER BUSINESS**

56 BUSINESS PROJECTS

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: GARDEN OF EDEN

In an effort to keep as much waste out of the landfill as she can, owner Carla Pettit started composting floral and greenery scraps through a compost pick-up service. This material is now turned into High County Compost that can be used on lawns and gardens, making a closed loop system.

K-12 EDUCATION



"The coolest thing was when you told us there's wasted food in the soil!"

—DILLON VALLEY 3RD GRADER

INSPIRING SUMMIT COUNTY'S FUTURE LEADERS

From wind-powered sail cars and solar bugs to recycling games and compost science, HC3 teaches Summit County's K-12 students the importance of protecting our natural resources.

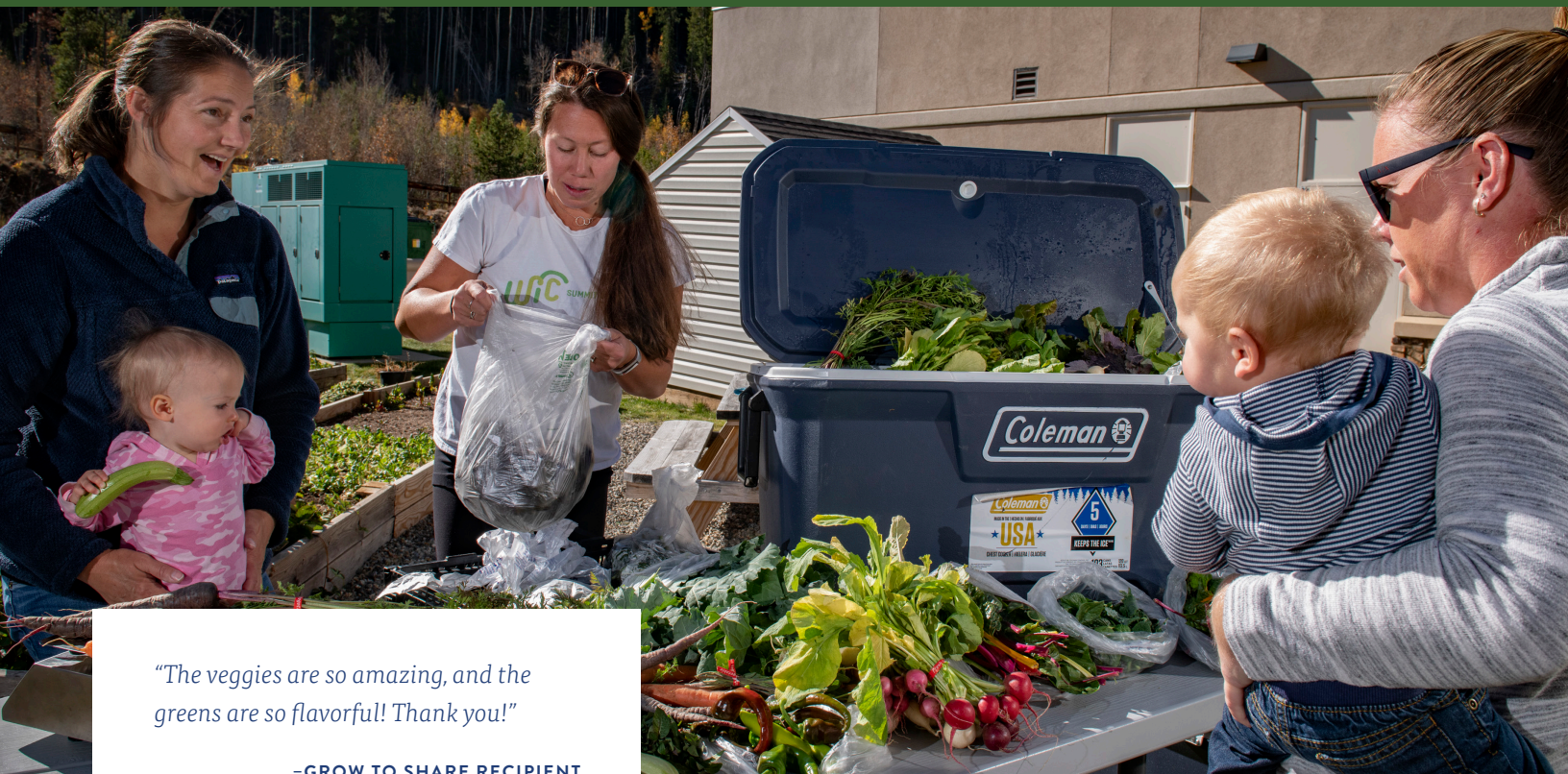
119 3RD GRADERS
Rocky's Recyclers

270 7TH GRADERS
Water Warriors

137 4TH GRADERS
Energy Explorers

3,620 STUDENTS RECYCLING
Food Scraps

SUSTAINABLE FOOD



"The veggies are so amazing, and the greens are so flavorful! Thank you!"

—GROW TO SHARE RECIPIENT

GROWING LOCAL FOOD

Greens grown in California travel over 1,200 miles to reach Summit County. The greens – and much more – grown locally by HC3 account for far less emissions and much more nutrition.

GROW TO SHARE

Fresh produce donations and nutritional education for local families.



20 SHARES WEEKLY
to Families in Need



26% INCREASE
in Donated Produce

SUMMIT CSA

Community farm-share program offering fresh, locally grown food.



77 COMMUNITY SHARES



7,099 POUNDS
of Local Produce

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FINANCIALS ARE PROVIDED IN AUGUST

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