

# #184

**COMPLETE**

**Collector:** Gimbel Foundat...nd Evaluation (Web Link)  
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Page 1

**Q1** Name of your organization.

Wild Bear Center for Nature Discovery

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**Q2** Grant #

20170152

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**Q3** Grant Period

April 15, 2017-April 15, 2018

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**Q4** Location of your organization

City	<b>Nederland</b>
State	<b>Colorado</b>

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**Q5** Name and Title of person completing evaluation.

Jill Dreves, Executive Director

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**Q6** Phone Number:

303-258-0495

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**Q7** Email address.

jill@wildbear.org

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Page 2: Key Outcomes and Results

**Q8** Total number of clients served through this grant funding:

29,030

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**Q9** Describe the project's key outcomes and results based on the goals and objectives. Use the following format: State the Goal: State Objective 1: Describe the Activities, Results and Outcomes for Objective 1: State Objective 2 (if applicable): Describe the Activities, Results and Outcomes for Objective 2: State Objective 3 (if applicable): Describe the Activities, Results and Outcomes for Objective 3:

Project Goal: Provide comprehensive youth programming (ages 3-15) that inspires all children, regardless of income, to increase their awareness, knowledge, connection, and appreciation of our natural world..

Objective 1: Provide programs that are economically accessible to the whole community, including affordable pricing, flexible scheduling, and scholarships.

Activities:

1. Provide scholarships to children from qualifying families using our new sliding scale that ranges from 100% scholarship (CCAP), 50% scholarship (Free/Reduced Lunch), to 10% scholarship (moderate income families).

RESULTS: With funds secured through the S.L. Gimbel Foundation, WILD BEAR PROVIDED 345 programs to 3678 children ages 3-5 with 53% participating through scholarships.

2. Increase access to the Wild Bear Nature Center for all families by increasing the center's hours and staffing. Our target population is low-income families who cannot afford to pay to play with their children. Our goal is to increase the number of visitors at the center by 20% this fiscal year, and increase our staffing and hours by 4 hours per week.

RESULTS: Wild Bear remained open almost every day of the year and enjoyed over 25,000 general visitors who enjoyed exhibits, talking with our highly qualified staff about local trails and ecological interests. This number continues to increase over this spring leading into summer.

Objective 2: Provide safe, creative, age-appropriate, educational, and fun environmental education programming year-round to children ages 3-15.

RESULTS:

1) Wild Bear increased its University Intern program and enjoyed 5 interns who were hired through a rigorous process of application, interview, reference checks and background checks. These interns gain a tremendous amount by working with our highly qualified education staff and dedicated 40 hours/week for 10 weeks of summer nature programs. This program is an extraordinarily mutually beneficial program to the interns, the children, to their parents and to our staff. These interns were critical to supporting Wild Bear's low child:adult ratio serving 3,678 children ages 3-15;

2) Wild Bear provided 29 programs to 176 Kindergarten children who came to Wild Bear for afternoon natural science enrichment. Nederland Elementary only provides 1/2 day kindergarten.

3) Wild Bear provided 29 "Bear Cub" nature programs (every Wednesday) where ages 271 3-5 engaged in hands-on natural science programs.

4) After School Programs engage on average 15 children/day in hands-on nature themes every Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday (totaling 1,155 children) with 55% participating through scholarships provided through the S.L. Gimbel Foundation. Wild Bear's staff is highly qualified (Bachelor's in the field of education) and Wild Bear was able to hire an assistant for this program. This program engages a number of high needs children from the community and this extra staffing has been critical to our success. Wild Bear also provided 9 full day nature programs on days off from school to 68 children with 55% participating through scholarships provided by the S.L. Gimbel

## S.L. Gimbel Foundation Fund

Foundation.

5) Wild Bear provided 142 programs to 1,830 school age children Mon-Friday for 10 weeks over the summer months. 48% participated through scholarships provided by the S.L. Gimbel Foundation! Wild Bear increased its offerings to 10-15 year olds adding a Monday nature program at our partner location, Kellogg Ranch. Wild Bear also increased enrollment to the fly fishing camp by hiring an additional staff with support from the S.L. Gimbel Foundation. This is an underserved population in Boulder County.

6) Wild Bear was able to rent a Boulder Valley School bus to transport our Nedar Rangers (ages 5/6) and Mountain Rangers (ages 6/7) to 3,200 acres north of town, Mud Lake and Caribou Ranch Open Spaces. Wild Bear was able to secure another vehicle and maintain Wild Bear vehicles to transport our older children (Wild Naturalists ages 8-9 and programs for 10+ fly fishing, homesteading, peak bagging) through support from the S.L. Gimbel Foundation).

7) Wild Bear increased supplies for children in our nature programs with increased fly fishing gear, stocking of private lake, journals, magnifying lenses, aquatic and terrestrial nets, field guides, games and toys through support from the S.L. Gimbel Foundation.

We thank you so very much for your support as we continue to grow our opportunities for disadvantaged youth in our broad community. Wild Bear programs are modestly priced (the lowest in our county) and Wild Bear implemented the sliding scale scholarship program which increased our ability to serve families who would not otherwise be able to afford to attend. Wild Bear does not turn a family away due to their inability to afford tuition and we are able to do this largely due to the generosity of the S.L. Gimbel Foundation. THANK YOU!

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**Q10** Please describe any challenges/obstacles the organization encountered (if any) in attaining goals & objectives.

Wild Bear Nature Center had an extraordinarily successful year more than accomplishing its goals as set out through this grant. We do have licensing limitations and were at capacity on many days throughout the summer. We are proud of our success and thank you again to the support of the S.L. Gimbel Foundation.

Wild Bear leases its current space in a shopping center on a cement parking lot. Wild Bear pays \$43,000/year for its space and just was asked to downsize its space so that the landlord could charge fair market value for 1/3 of the space. This presents a square footage problem for serving the number of children that we serve.

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**Q11** How did you overcome and/or address the challenges and obstacles?

Wild Bear will be renovating the 2/3 remaining space to accommodate need in our community. The State of Colorado Child Care Licensing will be working with us to approve a mobile license at the local park. With Wild Bear's renovations and the park, Wild Bear will be able to more than accommodate the need of 50 or more children/day at Wild Bear Nature Center.

We are also working toward building our permanent nature center on our property at Mud Lake. Wild Bear celebrated a successful "land swap" this year with Boulder County Open Space and now we own a new 5 acres at the gateway of 3,200 preserved acres. Wild Bear has now completed strategic planning and will be implementing the feasibility study at the beginning of March, 2018 with the intent to launch a capital campaign to raise the funds for a permanent nature center.

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**Q12** Describe any unintended positive outcomes as a result of the efforts supported by this grant.

We are grateful for the support of the S.L. Gimbel Foundation as all of our programs and participation continue to grow! We are proud of our positive impact on children and our community. Through funding secured through the S.L. Gimbel Foundation Wild Bear has seen a continuous increase in scholarship requests for disadvantaged families in our year round programs.

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**Q13** Briefly describe the impact this grant has had on the organization and community served.

Wild Bear Nature Center is the ONLY nonprofit nature center in all of Boulder County. Support from the S.L. Gimbel Foundation has allowed us to be open almost every day throughout the year. This has a massive impact on the image and identity of the small mountain town of Nederland, Colorado.

In parent evaluations of our children's programs, parents comment all of the time about how fortunate they are to have such a high quality and educational program in their community. Wild Bear is unique as it engages children year round and many come every day and throughout the year. These children identify themselves as "Wild Bears". In a time when we are so engaged in electronics and children are not going outside, Wild Bear is a leader in engaging children in these very healthy and happy experiences that build an identity to last a lifetime!

Here is a link of our photos from last summer and we thank you again for your generous support of these amazing programs.

<https://business.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.1549143398441306.1073741955.121767597845567&type=1&l=93d889421e>

Thank you again for your support.

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Page 3: Budget

## S.L. Gimbel Foundation Fund

**Q14** Please provide a budget expenditure report of the approved line items. Include a brief narrative on how the funds were used to fulfill grant objectives.

Transportation for ages 5-7 during the summer: \$7,000

Transportation for youth to fly fishing. \$3,000

5 University Interns: \$6,000

Materials and Supplies: \$2,000

School year Staff: \$5,000

Nature Center staff: \$2,000

Wild Bear Nature Center hires a Boulder Valley School Bus and certified driver to transport children ages 5-7 to 3,200 acres of wild land north of Nederland, Colorado. Wild Bear also owns 2 vehicles that require ongoing safety maintenance. S.L. Gimbel Foundation funds allow us to maintain a secure ability to transport children outside of the center which is located in a shopping center on a cement parking lot. This transportation is critical to our ability to engage children in nature and we thank the foundation for this very important support.

Our University interns are also critical to our ability to maintain low ratios with top quality adults. Wild Bear maintains an average of 6:1 ratio (children:adult) which is well below the state standard (15:1). S.L. Gimbel foundation funds allowed Wild Bear to increase the stipend to these University students from \$250/month to \$500/month and thus we were able to attract a much larger and higher qualified pool of candidates.

Funds through the S.L. Gimbel foundation allow Wild Bear to keep our tuition rates modest (the lowest in the county) by offsetting the expense of acquiring top quality materials for learning. Wild Bear integrates the arts into all of our natural science programs and funds support our ability to do so (paints, clay, journals, watercolor paper, photography materials) as well as science materials (terrestrial and aquatic nets, field guides, magnifying lenses, etc) as well as maintaining fly fishing gear for children in our fly fishing camps.

With the support of the S.L. Gimbel Foundation, Wild Bear was able to employ top quality educators to deliver programs during the school year to children after school, on full days off as well as to our 3-5 year olds (Bear Cubs). Wild Bear hired Val Jacobsen and Marley Pegler to plan and deliver excellent nature themed programs 3 days/week after school. These educators are highly qualified with Bachelor degrees in the field as well as thousands of hours planning and implementing nature programs to children.

Through funding secured through the S.L. Gimbel Foundation, Wild Bear was able to hire a "Visitors Services" staff to open the nature center on weekends and actively engage with visitors. This was an amazing step forward for Wild Bear to grow its vision of the nature center and provide free opportunities to families to engage with experienced staff to learn about the exhibits in the center as well as where to hike or snowshoe and what amazing seasonal nature wonders to notice as they ventured into the woods!

Again, we thank the S.L. Gimbel Foundation for all of your support as we continue to engage all ages in top quality nature experiences almost every day throughout the year!

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Page 4: Success Stories

**Q15** Please relate a success story:

A STORY FROM ONE OF OUR INSTRUCTORS: "Last summer, one of the kids in my Wild Bear group of 10 children, was an 8-year old girl named Maya who has an exploring spirit. One day we hiked to the back side of a lake called Red Rock. Maya, as was her way, wanted to explore up the forested slope we were sitting below. She asked if the whole group could go up there and explore. Being of an exploring spirit myself, I agreed. When we got up there we found a beautiful and secluded pond that we had not known was up there. We also found a path marked for snowshoeing that I wanted to return sometime and explore. Well, this morning it was raining in Boulder and I decided I would drive as high up as I could in the mountains to wander in the wet Fall weather and wishfully thought maybe it might be snowing up there. I drove up to an area near Brainard Lake at about 10,500 feet above sea level just above the aspens of the Montane ecozone. After parking I set off in a misty drizzle to hike to Red Rock Lake, an easy mile hike on a conifer tree lined trail. As I got to the lake I remembered "Maya's pond" and how I had wanted to explore the snowshoe path there. I also thought wishfully, if I was going to see a moose today that secluded pond might be just the spot. The mist was becoming thicker and wetter and I wishfully thought, up this high maybe it could snow. I continued to the back side of Red Rock Lake, following a narrow forest path on up that same forested slope to "Maya's pond". The first thing I saw as I looked out at the pond from the surrounding forest was a moose! It was standing on the far side of pond, in the mist, browsing shrubs, but looked up at me as I stepped out of the forest into view. I sat down on a boulder at the edge of the pond and took its photo. As I sat on the boulder looking at the moose and mist and the fir trees in the distance a gust of wind came across the pond and it was full of snowflakes! I had found a moose as I had hoped and immediately after that came snow. I would never have known about this pond if not for Maya. I sat for a time and then set off exploring the snowshoeing path in falling snow. I wandered on this backwoods path and others to which it connected for the next two hours in falling snow. At Wild Bear this past summer, the nature name I adopted, some of you may remember, was "Falling Snow". So today, I was Falling Snow walking in falling snow, in what I like to refer to as first flakes. But, first flakes is a story for another day."

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### Q16 Please relate a success story here:

My name is Michael, 34 years old with 5 children, 3 boys and 2 girls. i never imagined being a dad before the children for i still was in search for one myself. 11 years ago their was a change in the way i precieved the meaning and purpose of life. from the darkness into the light. i didnt have many if any positive influences in life rather had to figure everything out. mostly the hard way too.

We moved from Denver Colorado to boulder 2 years ago, just up the canyon 3 miles up behind the red lion restaurant into a little cabin. the kids and i have always been close so the one bedroom was comforting. The kids and i increased our adventures in the mountains. talk about a place were a kid can be a kid. ok, a place even adults become kid like... Reflecting on nature is an important task for my family for i feel so much that many answers we seek in life are right here, in the wild..in nature. I have to admit the mountain environment has help my children and i to become more open and understanding of our roles as a family.

We got our share of the flood impact. talk about a spiritual realization.The rain starts and seemed no end was any time soon. leaving our things we drove around, came up the canyon to see a rock slide at magnolia, then on our way back down we witnessed a huge part of a mountain with huge trees jus melted into the raging creek. i reflected with the kids on how small we are yet play such a huge roll. we contemplated Gods storm and watched little cracks in the streets turn into mini canyons. no calls so we decided to check on our stuff at storage.... as we drove up my mouth dropped.. i here one of the kids say... oh our toys were in their... yes, we were looking at nothing. how was i going to ease their little hearts of loss. for its never been easy to aquire toys and stuff period having a big family. As my throt was choked up trying to explain to the kids, don't worry. i took pretty hard inside but seeing that the kids were patient made me strong. we tried to go back to the cabin but the river of mud coming from the back of the mountain was too risky.

A month of hotels with 5 kids was no skip in the park while trying get us a home, finding work and trying to scrape together our loss. it was one really big test. one thing for sure i counseled with the kids were moving out of the city back into the mountains. one night after i crawl over the kids i found a little spot of rug open and fell to my knees and cried.... i had to be strong but i forget sometimes that i am human and it poured out. i cried to God please help us and to open for us a way i know not, cus really i had not a clue. A few days later we got the call that a place in Nederland Colorado opened up and we could move after the canyon was opened up. praise be to God the place was amazing. the little town drew so much curiosity between the kids and i. so much to explore.

the one thing that i noticed quickly was the many places or shops here the children should not be in or around. i have learned to better safe guard my family i don't go to a place i cant take my children. tucked away next to the police station is a place called wild bear.. just the name alone drew the kids and i. never have we found a place with live animals ans such a real life, factual hands on of nature. and it was focused on children. After a few months of warming up to the lil town wild bear became a place that we visit often. everything from animal shows to survival to the reminding of please drown your camp fire. wild bear was like the life id always been looking for.. i mean this is our life and it was amazing to find their was a place that suited our cravings for adventure and learning. Beneficial knowledge means a lot to me and almost recently wild bear shown me this.

I was asked to be a creature for the enchanted forest, thus the character came with a script and on it was a note to fallow the script and only factual information. that meant a lot to me. education is only as important as its facts! over the summer i let my kids go to the camp were they learned things that i promise no school will teach them. i have that connection with the kids that if they are happy, so am i. Not one incident made me question the security, moral and emotional status of wild bear and its volunteers. as a single parent almost everything makes me paranoid and i have to say, wild bear is a well needed trust. their is so much more that my children and i can say about wild bear but i'd say if you want to know more, come and experience it for your self, most important, let your children experience and live with nature instead of watching it on a television...

I want to personally thank Jill Dreves for showing us though life posses unfounded challenges and obsticals a good dream, pure heart and determination is what will make today for us, a tomorrow for the children.

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### Q17 Please relate a success story here:

Testimonials from our evaluations that were sent at the end of summer camp 2017:

"We fell in love with the center & it's mission on our first visit, & after trying a couple of wild bear classes when our son was 3, he love it so much that we knew it was worth our/his time."

"When asked, he talked for a solid 5 minutes listing the different topics covered in class. But above all, he loves the time spent outdoors at Mud Lake"

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"Wild Bear is fun! Only Mtn. ecology in Boulder County!"

"My daughter knows what a nymph is & hibernation & outdoor etiquette."

"My granddaughter enjoyed camp."

"Offers an appreciation of the mountain environment."

"It is a great summer camp that is outside, is full day & you can pick which days you attend."

"Holden liked the educational part. Robbie & Jackson liked the hiking (really, they all liked the hiking."

"They talked about the rain cycle immediately after camp. When we hike together they point out plants & animals/animal tracks that they learned at Wild Bear."

"Wild Bear has increased their interest & knowledge of nature."

"What summer camp should be about!"

"It's really nice to teach city kids about nature."

"They always teach us things when they come home."

"We love visiting Ned and always like being outdoors where its cool"

"I think you have it all dialed in. The teachers are great with the children and the programs are fun and interesting."

"We think very highly of Wild Bear."

"It is an amazing space with great programs, wonderful teachers & fun environment to learn in."

"Her favorite thing about Wild Bear is learning lots of new things. She doesn't have a least favorite thing."

"I'm not sure how to rate this, but I can say she always came home talking about what she learned."

"Wild Bear has been such a positive experience for 7 years! Now she's becoming a counselor in training!"

"Great way to use time constructively."

"Wild Bear is like a family to me. Loves the little ones and they love her."

"She knows the names of about 100 wildflowers. Very nurturing for her, emotionally over the years! So grateful for caring staff & for financial help."

"She's very appreciate of nature. Quite knowledgeable about birds, insects, flowers. Counteracts electronics."

"Get the kids involved in nature and respect it and people."

"The teachers are great and very kind."

"The entire family loves the Enchanted Forest. I was happy to see the campfire last year."

"Gives the kids a connection to nature."

"My daughter loves playing in the dirt."

"Lets kids be kids and get dirty!"

"My kids love it and are so grateful for the chance to play outside."

"My son impressed people with scientific knowledge gained."

"He can name all different types of clouds, showed me what gumweed is, and what you can use it for."

"They love it and were always excited to go! Thank you for the great Summer!"

"I like the option to pick & choose individual days. My kids say they love getting out in nature with friends."

"She loves the camp song!"

"Great camp. Love that she could take the bus from Boulder. Great being in Nederland on hot days."

"She talks about different insects and shows a wider interest in nature."

"Our daughter loved it and it was good for her."

"She loved every part. Seriously. She did not have one complaint. Not one."

"She taught us about what to do in a flash flood."

"You all encourage her love for nature to grow more."

"Great authentic learning experiences."

"He's more willing to hike and loves to explore when we do hike."

"Connects kids to nature around them."

"The programs are engaging and valuable."

"Unique, fun, educational OUTSIDE learning."

S.L. Gimbel Foundation Fund

**Q18** Which category best describes the organization.  
Please choose only one.

**Educational Institution**

**Q19** What is the organization's primary program area of interest?

**Environment/Environmental**

**Q20** Percentage of clients served through grant in each ethnic group category. Total must equal 100%

Caucasian	<b>80</b>
Other	<b>10</b>
Unknown	<b>10</b>

**Q21** Approximate percentage of clients served from grant funds in each age category.

Children Birth-05 years of age	<b>5</b>
Children ages 06-12 years of age	<b>75</b>
Youth ages 13-18	<b>10</b>
Adults	<b>10</b>

**Q22** Approximate percentage of clients served with disabilities from grant funds.

No clients served with disabilities	<b>90</b>
Physically Disabled	<b>5</b>
Deaf & Hearing Impaired	<b>5</b>

**Q23** Approximate percentage of clients served in each economic group.

At/Below Poverty Level	<b>30</b>
Homeless/Indigent	<b>5</b>
Working Poor	<b>30</b>
Other	<b>35</b>

**Q24** Approximate percentage of clients served from grant funds in each population category.

Families	<b>10</b>
Children/Youth (those not included in Family)	<b>90</b>