



CROSS CONSERVATION SCHOOL

ANN & SANDY CROSS CONSERVATION AREA

What do you call a unique and inspiring educational program where nature is the teacher and the classroom is the great outdoors? Where you are immersed in the landscape learning the cultural, ecological and biological aspects of the natural world? Where exploration and discovery is encouraged? Where the land has many stories and you become part of the story?

The Ann & Sandy Cross Conservation Area (ASCCA) is a 4800 acre wildlife reserve that consists of aspen forest, grassland and pond ecosystems. The ASCCA was generously donated by Ann & Sandy Cross in 1987, passionate visionaries in both the protection of native species of wildlife and in the education of youth. The Cross Conservation School was started in 2000 and quickly became the cornerstone of the educational programming at the ASCCA. The Chevron Open Minds program continues to thrive and evolve.

Students experience the wonders of nature through hands-on exploration that encourages and stimulates critical thinking, problem solving and journaling. The variety of topics to explore is endless. Students expand their world by learning about the importance of habitat, wildlife, ecosystems, biodiversity, the interconnectedness of all living things, cultural uses of the land, stories, stewardship, and an environmental conservation ethic. They can even test their physical and mental boundaries with hiking and all-weather wilderness immersion resulting in feelings of empowerment and classroom comradery. Cross Conservation School encourages students to slow down and look deeply at the natural world. We make time for those teachable moments when some mysterious scat or tracks have been located; a herd of deer is grazing along the trail; or the majestic soaring of a red tail hawk in search of it's lunch. These are the moments that inspire and create wonder that continues to resonate long after the week is complete.

