



## Wetland Well Removal Project

2015

### A Partnership with the Rocky Mountain Inventory and Monitoring Network

#### Background

Wetland research and monitoring has been ongoing in Rocky Mountain National Park for many decades. Wells installed in wetland complexes help:

- Monitor the effectiveness of restoration efforts such as the Grand Ditch Restoration project and the Elk and Vegetation Management Plan
- Monitor ecological health of park wetlands as part of the Rocky Mountain Network Inventory & Monitoring (ROMN) Vital Signs Program
- Monitor specific wetland complexes as benchmark or reference wetlands that have been the subject of research over many years.

However, many wells are no longer needed for the original research projects or are redundant. Park staff, with assistance from the ROMN, will remove 165 small wells (2 inch diameter PVC pipe wells extending 1-3 m into the ground) over the next several years.



SdN

Rocky Mountain Inventory & Monitoring Network employee Alexa Armstrong removes a well from Endovalley.

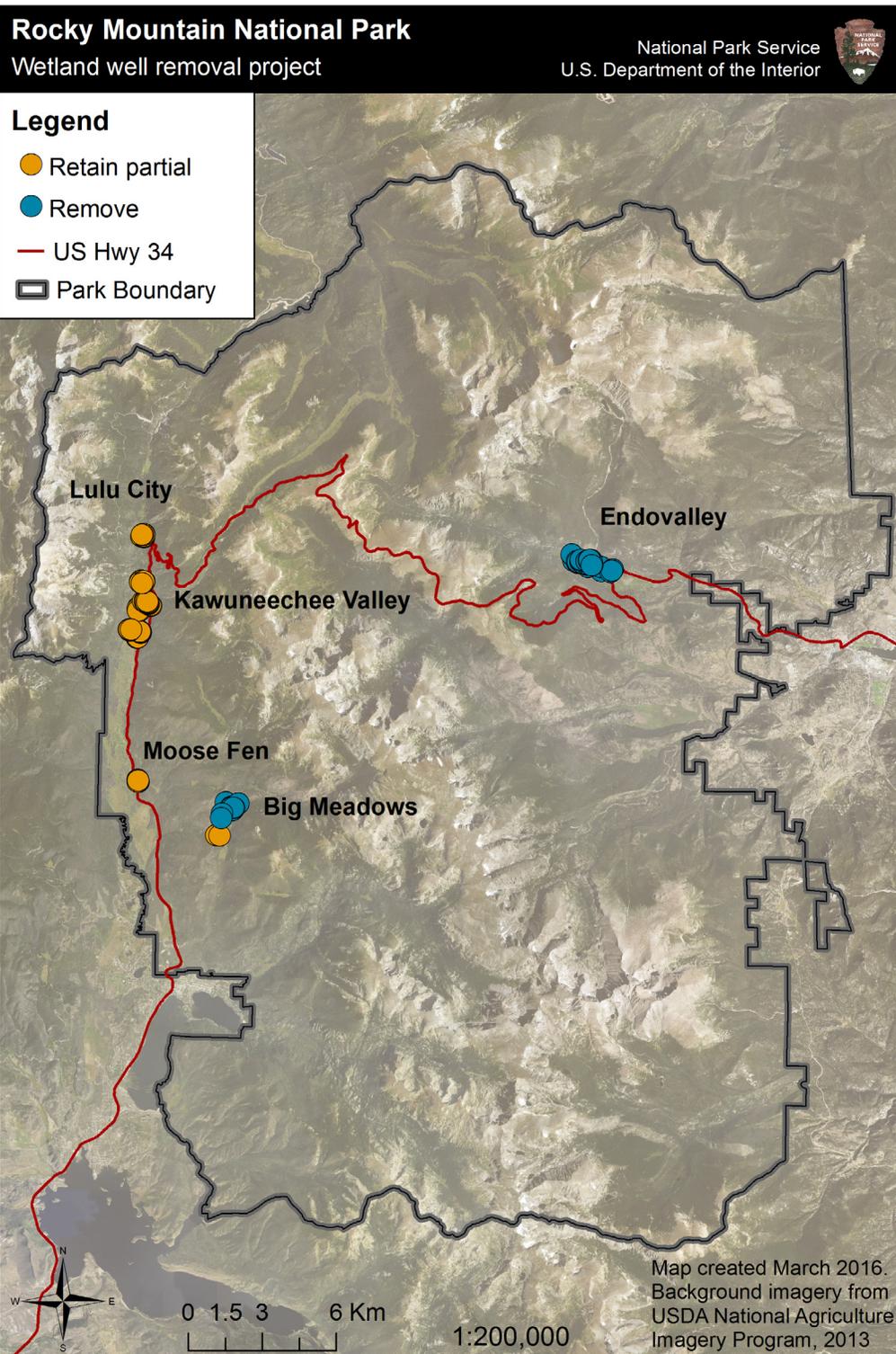
#### 2015 Accomplishments

In June 2015, ROMN crews dedicated roughly 50 hours to the well removal effort. During this time, they removed 25 wells (15%) while 30 wells were determined “lost;” most of these were washed out or buried in sediment by the 2013 floods in the Alluvial Fan area.

Some well locations south of the Roaring Fork River in Endovalley and in Big Meadows were inaccessible in June due to high water and will be visited later in the season.



Wells removed from Big Meadows in 2015.



## About the ROMN

The Rocky Mountain Network is one of 32 vital signs monitoring networks across the National Park Service. We have been monitoring status and trend in wetlands, streams, and alpine vegetation and soils in Rocky Mountain National Park since 2006.

## For More Information

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More about Inventory & Monitoring:

<http://science.nature.nps.gov/im/>

Visit our website:

<http://science.nature.nps.gov/IM/units/romn/index.cfm>

**Figure 1.** After carefully looking at the original purpose and location of each well, the ROMN provided a recommendation for each:

- 1) Remove the well because the research project is complete (blue)
- 2) Retain the well for continuing monitoring and/or research (not pictured)
- 3) Retain partial (orange)

The recommendation “retain partial” applies to wells in focal wetlands and means the ROMN recommend retaining a portion (~3) of the wells in each of these important wetlands due to their long history of research and monitoring and value as reference sites.