



Brad McRae

August 13, 1966 - July 13, 2017

Brad McRae, ecologist and conservationist, beloved husband, father, brother, and friend, passed away on July 13 from stomach cancer.

Born in Rochester, New York, in 1966, Brad was the youngest child of Oscar Brents and Phyllis McRae. He grew up enjoying windsurfing on Lake Ontario. Brad earned a degree in electrical engineering from Clarkson University, but after only a few years as an engineer, discovered a passion for the outdoors and for conservation. He earned his master's degree in Land Resources from the University of Wisconsin at Madison, and his PhD in Forest Science from Northern Arizona University. Brad was a postdoctoral fellow at the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis, and worked for the remainder of his career for The Nature Conservancy. Professionally, Brad leaves an impressive legacy. Brad pioneered the use of circuit theory to model connectivity and gene flow across fragmented landscapes, which is now used in conservation planning around the world. His work garnered coverage in media outlets like Wired Magazine and Conservation Magazine. His software packages that help conservation planners design wildlife corridors and healthy landscapes are downloaded more than 500 times a month, and his more than 30 peer-reviewed publications have been cited thousands of times.

Brad was also an avid outdoorsman and naturalist. He passionately loved all forms of skiing –backcountry hut trips, downhill telemark skiing, cross country and skate skiing. He was always happy to play in the snow in any form. He also loved surfing, and especially catching waves on the stand-up

paddleboard. He spent countless days backpacking and hiking throughout the United States, as well as mountain biking, canoeing, trail running, and any other activity that brought him out into nature, where he unfailingly interrupted his sports for impromptu birding and botanizing sessions.

Everyone who knew Brad was impressed with his intelligence, humor, thoughtfulness, integrity, and steadfast commitment to family, friends and conserving the natural world. He leaves us too soon and will be dearly missed by the many friends who had the good fortune to know him. He is survived by his wife and two children.

A memorial will be held at his home in Fort Collins on August 13th.

Tribute Wall

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“ I am sorry for your loss. May your family draw strength and comfort from God's promise at Isaiah 41:10: “Do not be afraid, for I am with you. Do not be anxious, for I am your God. I will fortify you, yes, I will help you, I will really hold on to you with my right hand of righteousness.”

AnnieB - July 25, 2017 at 02:41 PM