



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **New District Forester for Huerfano, Las Animas Counties**

**LA VETA, Colo. – Jul. 14, 2016** – The Colorado State Forest Service has hired a new district forester to supervise its La Veta District, which serves Huerfano and Las Animas counties. Derek Sokoloski replaces the well-known and longtime previous District Forester C.K. Morey, who was on the district for 38 years and retired late in 2014.

Mark Loveall, La Veta’s assistant district forester, has served since Morey departed as the interim lead for the district, efficiently handling all forestry issues on the district single-handedly. Loveall continues to serve with the district.

Sokoloski had most recently been working in northwestern Wisconsin, where he was with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for 10 years. While there, he practiced forest management on private, state, county and federal lands, and also served as a wildland firefighter and certified law enforcement officer. He has a forestry degree from Virginia Tech.

“I had always envisioned myself working in the western states somewhere, and it was just a matter of time before I would find myself here,” Sokoloski said. “The CSFS attracted my attention as an agency namely because of the variety of work we do, and the flexibility that is available to reach out to the community with effective forest and fire management messages.”

Sokoloski says he enjoys biking, hiking, mountaineering, climbing, skiing and “most anything human-powered in nature.” He says his biggest accomplishment was completing the ultimate goal of the sport of “highpointing,” which is ascending to the highest point in all 50 states. He completed the endeavor in 2014 on Mount Katahdin in Maine.

The CSFS La Veta District works with private landowners on wildfire mitigation, insect and disease issues, urban and community forestry and general forest management. It also provides seedling trees for conservation purposes and works with partners managing state and federal lands. For more information, the district can be reached at 719-742-3588 or [CSFS\\_LaVeta@mail.colostate.edu](mailto:CSFS_LaVeta@mail.colostate.edu).

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*The Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) is a service and outreach agency of the Warner College of Natural Resources at Colorado State University and provides staffing for the Division of Forestry within the Colorado Department of Natural Resources. The CSFS provides technical forestry assistance, wildfire mitigation expertise and outreach and education to help landowners and communities achieve their forest management goals. The CSFS La Veta District serves Huerfano and Las Animas counties.*

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