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BACKCOUNTRY CACHE

A Newsletter for Members of CMC Backpacking Section

August 2024

CHAIR'S CORNER - Uwe Sartori

If you've not taken up a Backpacking trip, you still have time with great trips to choose from. Our September and October trips highlight the fall colors, mixed in with lovely hikes to beautiful alpine lake locations. How are we doing this season? Pretty good. A quick glance at the numbers shows we're having a decent number of trips completed. However, for nearly three trips that are successful, one trip is canceled. Causes center around weather, ground conditions - snow or fire hazard, and lack of participants.

I wanted to share with you a changing of the guard on the Committee. Randy Blosser is completing his second term as the BPX Special Projects Coordinator and resigning. Randy was involved with the BPX since its inception. He is the person most responsible for the 'engineering' and production of our BPX Trip Catalog. His contributions to the committee were many. Randy will be missed, but we'll surely see him on the trail. On behalf of the Committee and the BPX Members, Randy, thank you for your passion and the time you committed to building the CMC Backpacking Section into a successful, sustainable Colorado Mountain Club program.

UPCOMING BPX TRIPS

Trips will typically open up 30 days prior to their start date (trips requiring camping or permit fees may open up sooner). There is no limit on the number of BPX trips you can go on! However, you must be a member of the BPX Section.

E=Easy M=Moderate C=Challenging D=Difficult

Upcoming Trips with Openings*

- Aug 23-25 Fri-Sun M [Camp Lake from West Branch TH](#)
- Sep 3-7 Tue-Sat C [Washakie Pass, Lizard Head and Cirque of the Towers Loop](#)
- Sep 3-6 Tue-Fri C [5 Pass Loop Tour of the Horns from Matterhorn Creek TH](#)
- Sep 16-18 Mon-Wed M [Bison and McCurdy Peaks from Lost Creek TH](#)

Sep 17-18 Tue-Wed E [Abyss Lake Trail from Abyss Lake TH](#)
Sep 22-24 Sun-Tue C [Bluebird Lake from Wild Basin TH](#)
Sep 26-28 Thu-Sat M [North Crestone Lake from North Crestone Lake TH](#) Opens Sep 1, 12am

Upcoming Trips with 0-1 on Waitlist*

Aug 30- Fri-Mon M [Parvin, Island, and Wall Lake from Trappers Outlet TH](#)
Sep 2
Sep 9 - 11 Mon-Wed M [Camping - Crystal River Bogan Flats Campground](#)
Sep 21-22 Sat-Sun M [Emmaline Lake, Near Pingree Park in Poudre Canyon](#)
Sep 22-23 Sun-Mon C [Lake of the Clouds from Gibson Creek TH](#)

*As Of August 18. Continue to check the CMC Website since Leaders add trips throughout the season.

You can check your trip status by hovering over your name at the top of the main CMC Home Page and selecting the *My Activities* option from the dropdown. This displays a page with the activities you are registered for along with your status--Registered or Waitlist with your waitlist position. If you are on the waitlist, keep checking since there are often cancellations.

Whether you are on a waitlist or a roster, if you decide to NOT go on a trip, please CANCEL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. It may not seem necessary if you are on a waitlist, but many trips have a relatively high turnover shortly before the trip, so please cancel to open up a spot for the next person.

[Mountain Side Gear Rental](#) in Golden rents backpacking gear with a 10% discount for CMC Members.

SCHOOLS/EVENTS

DENVER

DAY HIKER SCHOOL Virtual Alternative to WTS. More info [here](#)
WILDERNESS TREKKING SCHOOL (WTS) Starts [Sep 3](#)
TRIP LEADER SCHOOL More info [here](#)
CPR/AED [Sep 17](#)
BACKCOUNTRY INCIDENT MANAGEMENT [Sep 14](#)

PIKES PEAK

WTS WILDERNESS FUNDAMENTALS Starts [Sep 16](#)
WTS LAND NAVIGATION Starts [Oct 9](#)

STATE

WILDERNESS FIRST AID/FIRST RESPONDER Multiple Offerings - Check CMC Website [here](#)

Continue to check the CMC Website for additional courses.

BPX TRIP REPORTS

Never Summer - Rocky Mountain National Park

Trip Leader Roger Leikas - Denver Group

In July, 5 participants headed to a remote section of RMNP on the west side. We were able on both days to set up our campsites just before the thunderstorms rolled in. We enjoyed Box Canyon Campsite the most as it had nearby a nice stream and access to alpine areas. On the second day we were able to hike up to

Thunder Pass in between a series of thunderstorms. On our third day we were able return to our cars and have a noon lunch at Sagebrush BBQ and Grill in Grand Lake. Good group of people/good group dynamic, and good leadership!



Goodwin Lakes in the Sangre De Cristo's

Trip Leader Marsha Littau - El Pueblo Group

We had a great trip backpacking into Goodwin Lakes in the Sangre De Cristo's. We were treated to beautiful wildflowers and waterfalls. Saturday the weather held just long enough for us to get to the lake and setup tents. Then a strong, windy, loud, storm moved in. The thunder and lightening rolled and crashed. It felt like it was on top of us. Later my companions informed me that the worst of it was a mile away. We hibernated in our tents until it passed. We had about a two hour break in weather just in time for dinner. Sunday, we enjoyed a leisurely breakfast during which we heard a roar. We spotted a rock slide. It went into the valley above us in the area of the tarn we had considered exploring. Due to weather concerns we left the two upper lakes for another time. The trail is steep. We wanted to be off the trail before the afternoon rains.



Upper Cataract Lake

Trip Leader Mara Saunders - Denver Group

In June 5 backpackers headed to Upper Cataract Lake in the Eaglesnest Wilderness. Overall it was a great trip, but there was still lots of snow so it was a little sketchy at times. Maybe best to do in later in the season. There was only 1 campsite, which we ended up sharing with another kind couple who was already there.



BPX TIP OF THE MONTH

10 Safety Tips from a Backpacker Who Learned the Hard Way

Do you ever wear yourself out with summer trips and hikes? This season in Colorado is so finite, I've been getting out as much as possible. Now I find myself, here in August, starting to feel worn out. It's okay, I have two more trips planned! I'm not done yet.

With all my backpacks and hikes, I've run into a few incidents this summer. In addition to this year, I've experienced lots of incidents over the years, ranging from getting lost to sick hikers, from injured dogs to flooded campsites, from failed shuttles to finding missing people in the woods. I've put together some of my hard-earned lessons here, so maybe you don't have to learn them *all* the hard way.

- Don't let your dog off leash, it's not worth it. I once had to remove dozens of porcupine quills from a dog's nose, mouth, and face after he got off leash. We were miles into the woods on a multi-day, and he needed emergency care. That was a tough day that involved off-trail route finding with an injured 70-pound dog with quills in its tongue. The tweezers in my first aid kit finally got their moment, though!
- The 10 essentials will often feel like overkill in your pack, especially on a day hike or side hike from camp. I found out how essential that shelter was when waiting hours for SAR to arrive to help my group once. A tarp and 30 feet of paracord kept us sheltered in a thunderstorm as we waited. What would you have with you on a side hike to shelter in these conditions? A bivy is nice, but it's nothing like a roof over your head.
- What do you do when your campsite floods? The first defense is to dig trenches around the tents with sticks – please note, this is not considered Leave No Trace, so try to repair them later. When this didn't work on a trip, as our site sat essentially in a bowl, we had to move tents during the rainstorm. To do this, first pack up your sleeping bag, pad, and sleeping clothes in waterproof containers and get them out of the tent. Then move the pitched tent with the fly on (works best for freestanding tents) and don't snag it on every tree. Good luck.
- A hiker who needs help doesn't always ask for it. You have to pay attention. This happened to me when I met a man on the trail who casually asked for directions to a trailhead I knew was far away. It turned out he was off route and had already spent the night out unintentionally. I asked more questions and ended up intervening to help this person.
- When doing a shuttle trip with a car parked at either end of your route, triple check the second driver has their keys with them before you leave the first car and start hiking. Quadruple check. I didn't do this once and we realized the second driver left his keys in the first car after 18 miles and a heavy downpour. That was the first time I ever hitch hiked. It was weird. I don't want to do it again.
- If you're hiking with a group, the group should always stay together. On a non-CMC hike years ago, I was a fast young hiker and kept leaving a slow hiker behind. I would wait periodically and he'd catch up. The last time, he never showed up. This turned into a multi-day search. He disappeared within a half mile of trail. This can happen far too easily.
- If someone experiences nausea, it's a trip ender. After having two people with altitude sickness on trips, I will now always call the trip at the first sight of nausea and vomiting. Don't tell me you're just hungover from last night, that is not better.
- The Garmin InReach is a great investment. When I needed it, it worked really well. Make sure you have the Garmin app on your phone, which connects to the device via Bluetooth. The Garmin app makes typing messages much easier, as the InReach does not have a keyboard. Having two-way communication with emergency dispatch, and with my mom – who likes to tell me what she's eating for dinner 1500 miles away – has been such an important tool for me.
- Keep your sleeping bag in a dry bag. Don't just shove it in the bottom of your pack. Don't keep it in its drawstring stuff sack. You want a waterproof bag, preferably a compression dry bag that squishes it down small and keeps it waterproof. When someone's water straw got squished in the car on the way to the trailhead and leaked water all over my pack, with my loose sleeping bag inside it, I found out it's not just rain I need to protect my stuff from. It's also John.
- A light pack can be risky, as it might mean you don't have enough gear. But a heavy pack can be a trip-killer. I backpack with a lot of people who say "I don't want to know what my pack weighs." I

understand that packing is already a lot of work, and buying ultralight gear is expensive, but 3 miles into the hike if you're having a hard time and suddenly question if you even like backpacking, I will probably talk to you about packweight. Weigh your pack and try to keep it under 20% of your body weight, as a general rule. You'll like hiking more, I promise, and you'll reach camp quicker, which might be safer for the group.

What tips and tales do you have from the trail? We'd love to hear about them on our Facebook Group. Join the conversation [here](#).

Courtesy of Lisa Shroyer: CMC and BPX Trip Leader, Instructor in CMC Schools, and BPX Committee Member

LEAD THE PACK

WELCOME NEW BPX TRIP LEADERS

George Vandyke - Denver

BPX MEMBER INFO

BPX FACEBOOK: [BPX FB](#) Send Photos and Trips Reports to post on BPX Facebook Page to: maggie.burns1@gmail.com

BPX INSTAGRAM: [@co_backpacking_bpx](#)

BPX LINKS: Click [here](#) for BPX web page, [here](#) for BPX Member Benefits, and [here](#) for CMC Member Benefits.

BPX MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL: When renewing your CMC Membership, remember to choose the Backpacking Section for an additional \$20 on the SELECT YOUR SECTIONS page. You can also join/renew your BPX membership any time by clicking [here](#) or calling the CMC Office at (303) 279-3080.

DENVER GROUP MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES: [here](#)

AMC PARKING INFO: [here](#)

COLORADO ROAD INFORMATION: [here](#)

FIRE INFO: [National Interagency Fire Center News](#) [Colorado Fire Restrictions](#) [Wildfire Risk Management Checklist](#)

CMC Backpacking Section Supports Leave No Trace

CMC connects Coloradans with more than 3,000 trips, hikes and activities annually. Members also receive huge deals on outdoor gear, lodging, events and more.

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