



COLORADO MOUNTAIN CLUB

WESTERN SLOPE GROUP

Canyon to Crest Call Western Slope Group May 2024



WSG members are enjoying a post hike social gathering at the Edgewater Brewery in Grand Junction. Photo credit: Jill Mattoon.

See below on how to submit your favorite photo for the newsletter!

Save the Date for the CMC WSG Annual Dinner, Saturday, November 2!



Love long treks but hate carrying a heavy pack? You're not alone.

Join longtime CMC member, Diane Winger, as she reflects back on a variety of multi-day outings which were "supported" hikes. Whether the loads were carried by porters and guides, by mules, or by luggage transport services; or when the loads could be lightened because of the provisions provided at each night's destination, she and her travel companions found ways to travel light.

From the Pacific Crest and John Muir Trails in California, to the Milford Track in New Zealand, to a trek in Patagonia, to the South West Coast Path of the United Kingdom, to a trek in the Everest region of Nepal, join Diane and friends for a range of beautiful experiences that didn't require carrying a heavy load.

The photo above is of Diane on the Milford Track in New Zealand.

The event will be held at the Ute Indian Museum in Montrose on Saturday, November 2, 4:30-7:30pm. Stay tuned for more information and a link to sign up for the event.

Upcoming WSG Social Gatherings

The WSG will be organizing several social gatherings throughout the year. We'll hold them in brewpubs or other similar venues in Grand Junction, Paonia, Montrose, Ridgway or Durango. We'll list the dates and venues as they're determined. If you have a venue or town that you'd like to recommend, let us know at WSGofCMC@gmail.com. Please sign up on the CMC website so that we can let the venues know how many to expect. Stay tuned!



Great White Buffalo Bar at the Chipeta Lodge in Ridgway, Sunday, June 23, 3-5pm

[The Great White Buffalo Bar](#) is an open air rooftop bar at the Chipeta Lodge in Ridgway. "Panoramic mountain views await you at our open air rooftop bar with a retractable awning with misters in the summer and heaters and table top fire-pits for the cooler months and chilly evenings." It's located at 304 S Lena St in Ridgway. [Please register here so that we can let the GWBB know how many will attend.](#) And, join us for one of these 2 hikes before the gathering -- [Group 1 meets at 10:30am](#) and [Group 2 meets at 11am](#), both to see the dinosaur tracks above Ouray.

Conservation Corner

by Claire McCullough, WSG Conservation Chair

Update on the Protect the Dolores Movement



The Dolores River flows 241 miles from its headwaters in the San Juan Mountains before it reaches the Colorado River in Utah. A grassroots movement to protect the Dolores River Canyon Country has received substantial attention over the last few months from the various stakeholders, Western Slope citizens and local government officials.

Colorado Senators Michael Bennet and John Hickenlooper introduced legislation to designate a National Conservation Area to protect 68,000 acres of river corridor through Ponderosa Gorge. This effort has received bipartisan support. Sections of the river corridor that pass through Mesa and Montrose counties are not included in the proposed legislation. As a result, Colorado Wildlands Project spearheaded a movement to designate a national monument for 391,000 acres of Dolores River Canyons Country in Mesa and Montrose counties. Earlier this year, a petition in support of a national monument was circulating with a goal of 50,000 signatures. The overwhelming support of a national monument was revealed with over 103,000 signatures. According to a Colorado College poll, 92 percent of respondents said they support the proposed national monument.

In response to the movement, a petition is circulating on www.change.org in opposition to a national monument. As of the beginning of April, there were over 6,500 signatures. Concerns include impacts on mining, hunting and grazing. Montrose County Commissioners have unanimously opposed the idea of a national monument and have vowed to fight such efforts. In contrast, the Grand Junction City Council voted unanimously in favor of a national monument. Grand Junction Mayor Anna Stout was part of a delegation that recently visited leaders in Washington DC to discuss the proposal. Mesa County Commissioner Cody Davis would like to revive the idea of a National Conservation Area to include Mesa and Montrose counties.

Senator Hickenlooper has scheduled two listening sessions, giving local citizens an opportunity to express concerns or support for a national monument. The first listening session is scheduled for Friday, April 26 at 3:30pm in Naturita. The exact location will be disclosed upon registration to attend. The second session will be held on Saturday, April 27 at 10:30am in Grand Junction, at Colorado Mesa University – Robinson Theater. Please consider attending one of these sessions to show your support. [Registration is required to attend, and you may do so here.](#)

Photo credit: John Fielder.



Update on the Blue Lakes Visitor Use Plan

On April 17, 2024, the Ouray Ranger District of GMUG released its Environmental Assessment for the Blue Lakes Visitor Use Management Plan. The purpose of this process has been to develop a plan that will give the area a chance to recover from increased visitor use and preserve the once serene experience of the area. There has been a degradation of natural resources, increased management challenges and significant visitor conflicts. The planning area includes five zones: the Wilderness Zone, Mount Sneffels Zone, Yankee Boy Basin Zone, Lower East Dallas Zone and Blaine Basin Zone. The entire planning area is 16,200 acres, including 3,300 acres in the Mount Sneffels Wilderness (Blue Lakes Basin.) The most closely watched and major change would limit day use hiking as well as the number of designated camping sites for the Blue Lakes Trail area. The permit season would run from June 1 until September 30th.

A 45-day objection period is underway for those individuals who submitted timely, written comments. The CMC Western Slope Group previously submitted a comment during the comment period last fall, supporting the Ouray Ranger District's proposed variety of restrictions and management actions in its efforts to implement ecological restoration and monitoring strategies. A final decision will be made following the objection period, and if approved, the implementation of the plan will commence in the summer of 2025 or 2026. [The Environmental Assessment may be viewed here.](#)



Durango Area CMC Update

We're looking for Durango area volunteers to help plan activities (for which one does not have to be a leader) and we're also looking for trip leaders. Trip leader school is free and online! We will be updating happenings in this newsletter monthly. Contact us at WSGofCMC@gmail.com for more info or to get involved!

WSG Facebook Group

We have a private Facebook group called "CMC Western Slope Group". This group is available to post photos, announce last minute trips, trip reminders or activities. If you're interested, send a request in Facebook to join the group.

ALL CMC OUTINGS : [The CMC Trips List & Map](#)

Guests must create an account and sign a waiver before signing up for trips and may attend up to 2 trips. If a trip is full, please sign up on the waitlist as there are participants that cancel.

TRIPS: All of our activities are in one place at [Western Slope Group Calendar](#)

Saturday, 4/27. [Leader in Training \(LIT\) Hike – CMC Pack Guide Hike #6 \(Shortened-version to Forest Service Bridge below Gudy's Rest\), Durango](#). Dan King & Mike Foster.

Saturday, 5/4. [Hiking - Spring Birds Along the Animas River in Farmington, NM](#). Easy. Mike Foster.

Sunday, 5/5. [Hiking - Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Area \(Palisade\)](#). Moderate. Daniel Glatter.

Thursday, 5/16. [Hiking - Pollock Bench Trailhead](#). Moderate. Victor Ketellapper.

5/12-15. [Camp – BPX 4-Day: Colorado National Monument Saddlehorn Campground](#). Backpacking Section.

Saturday, 6/1. [Hiking - Early Summer Birds Along the Animas River in Farmington, NM.](#) Easy. Mike Foster.

Sunday, 6/23. [Hiking - Ouray's Silvershield Trail to the West Gold Hill Dinosaur Tracksite -- Group #1.](#) Moderate. Brenda Leach. If this trip is full, sign up for Group #2 below.

Sunday, 6/23. [Hiking - Ouray's Silvershield Trail to the West Gold Hill Dinosaur Tracksite -- Group #2.](#) Moderate. Jill Mattoon.

Saturday 6/29. [Castle Rock via Elbert Creek \(Durango\).](#) Dog friendly. Moderate. Anne Keil.

7/9-14. [Backpack - Colorado Trail - Segments 18 to 21.](#) John Broadbooks.

8/19-23. [In State Outing, YMCA of the Rockies Estes Park.](#) State CMC, fee.

9/3-7. [Backpack - BPX 5-Day: Washakie Pass, Lizard Head and Cirque of the Towers Loop.](#) John Broadbooks.

9/9-11. [Camp - BPX 3-Day: Crystal River Bogan Flats Campground.](#) Backpacking Section.

Late Sept/early Oct TBD weekday Palisade Plunge hike. 17 mile downhill. Email WSGofCMC@gmail.com for more info and to get cleared for the update list. <\$30/pp shuttle fee. Difficult. Anne Keil & looking for a co-leader.

October TBD, WSG 5th Annual Green River/San Rafael Swell Camping/Hiking Trip!

**All members and guests must sign a new liability waiver with the new website

COVID policy for trips: [updated Dec 9, 2022](#)

PRESENTATIONS / COURSES / EVENTS

5/25 & 26 Wilderness First Aid. Montrose-Tentative.

Sunday, 6/23, 3-5pm. [WSG Social Gathering at the Great White Buffalo Bar in Ridgway.](#)

Saturday, 11/2. WSG Annual Dinner. SAVE THE DATE!

CMC Schools & Classes Webpage: **For some classes and schools that are offered on the full CMC calendar (typically on the front range or via ZOOM), we can arrange field days on this side of the state but need a minimum number of participants between the various CMC groups. Please let us know if something interests you.

Trip Leader Training: **We are seeking trip leaders!** The free training consists of self paced online modules and one training hike plus Wilderness First Aid. Leader training online is also available to current leaders as a refresher.

Wilderness First Aid: Schedule for other state locations [here](#).

WFA Instructors Wanted: Are you WFA or higher (WFR, medical professional, etc.) certified and interested in helping recertify/teach WFA to our members and leaders locally in 2024? More information [here](#). Teaching also renews your certification and the training is free.

Seeking Monthly Newsletter Content

We'd like your help! If you have requests for newsletter content or would like to contribute, let us know! The deadline to submit information, articles or photos is the **25th of each month** for the following month's newsletter.

Western Slope Group Council

Chair & Outings Chair: Anne Keil (Montrose)

Vice Chair & Newsletter Editor: Brenda Leach (Ridgway)

Treasurer: John Broadbooks (Montrose)

Secretary: Jill Mattoon (Ouray)

Conservation Chair: Claire McCullough (Grand Junction)

We're on the CMC website at [Western Slope Group, CMC Groups - Colorado Mountain Club](#). Upcoming WSG Council meetings will be held on May 6. Zoom availability, time and location will be determined closer to the meeting dates. WSG members are welcome to attend.



Colorado Mountain Club
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