

Handbook

WELCOME TO THE GRAND COUNTY WILDERNESS GROUP!

Who We Are: We are a group of people who share a common interest in outdoor activities and are willing to put time and energy into helping the Forest Service.

Our Mission is: TO ASSIST THE US FOREST SERVICE IN THE PRESERVATION, PROTECTION, IMPROVEMENT AND PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE WILDERNESS AREAS IN GRAND COUNTY.

What We Do:

Group Activities

- 1. Cabin Hosting:** On certain days during the summer months, members staff the cabins at the Monarch Lake and Junco Lake trailheads. Cabin hosting responsibilities include but are not limited to greeting visitors, and answering questions. In early summer, an orientation is provided at each cabin for new members, those who have not hosted, and members needing a refresher. The training covers the hosting responsibilities, including cabin key location, and radio and/or telephone protocol.

Videos are available on the website to review some of the aspects of hosting, and a cabin hosting handbook is kept at each cabin with a copy on the website.

Those unable to attend training can learn by hosting with experienced members.

The hosting schedules are online on the GCWG website. Members use the website to sign-up for days they can host.

In general, hosts wear their volunteer name badge and/or a GCWG t-shirt, and are at the cabin from 9am-4pm.

- 2. Cabin Maintenance:** After the roads to Monarch and Junco Cabins are free of snow, members gather to clean up the cabins, paint and make repairs. We are supported in our maintenance activities by Forest Service expertise, equipment and manpower.

3. **Weed Warrior Day:** Volunteers gather at Monarch Lake to pull and bag noxious weeds at their growth peak. We are assisted by knowledgeable Forest Service staff.
4. **Information Booths:** A booth is set up at local art and craft fairs and the Granby 4th of July event to provide information about our group and the Grand County's Arapaho National Forest.
5. **Trail Maintenance:** Members can participate in different levels of trail maintenance- organized light trail work hikes and organized more intense trail workdays.
6. **Orientation Hikes:** Members can also participate in organized orientation hikes. The purpose of these hikes is to help familiarize members with new areas which they can then hike as trail ambassadors.
7. **Bulletin Boards:** New bulletin boards are constructed and installed at the major trailheads in Grand County by members and the Forest Service. They display information, regulations, and photos. Members assist in updating and maintaining the boards as needed.
8. **National Public Lands Day:** A volunteer coordinates a project on a non-motorized trail for members who wish to participate in this annual national workday.
9. **Christmas Bird Count:** The date is chosen and the event coordinated by the Forest Service based on guidelines from the National Audubon Society. If you like birds, you can spend this fun "work" day counting birds.
10. **Smokey Bear:** Members can volunteer to wear the Smokey Bear costume or be Smokey's "handler" at the annual Forest Service Christmas Tree sale.

Individual Activities

1. **Registration Boxes:** Members have built and now maintain 11 trailhead registration boxes. A member adopts a box for a year. This involves stocking the box with registration sheets, collecting them and tabulating information. The results are given to the registration box coordinator, who pulls together the results from all the boxes and creates a report for the Forest Service. This report is used for planning and funding.
2. **Trail Ambassador:** Being a trail ambassador involves representing the Forest Service while hiking the National Forest and Wilderness trails. Members identify themselves by wearing their volunteer t-shirts and/or forest service volunteer badge. They share information about forest service regulations and answer questions that other trail users may have. To familiarize yourself with the regulations refer to the instructional video and accompanying documents on the GCWG website.

3. **Recycling Fishing Line:** Fishing line is picked up by volunteers from collection tubes at various locations and recycled.
4. **Osprey Nest Observation:** Members sign-up to monitor specific Osprey nests in the county and report their observations to the Forest Service.
5. **Bluebird Boxes:** Members sign-up to clean and monitor one or more of the many Forest Service bluebird boxes in the county.
6. **Office Volunteer:** The Forest Service frequently requests volunteer help in the Granby office.

****There may be other opportunities for involvement.
Membership is notified of these by email. ****

Meetings, Picnics, and Parties

1. **Spring Meeting:** This business meeting announces group plans for the spring/summer/fall season. At the meeting members sign-up for upcoming volunteer opportunities. Forest Service staff attends and updates the group on any changes and their summer plans. The meeting is preceded by a cocktail “hour” and a potluck.
2. **Summer Picnic:** This social is held at the Forest Service AA Barn on the Colorado River. It is a chance to eat great food, and mingle with other members as well as Forest Service Staff.
3. **Fall Meeting:** This business meeting has the same format as the spring meeting. It is a time to say “job well done” and share experiences and accomplishments. We may have a Speaker of general interest.
4. **White Deer Party:** A mid-winter get-together to stay in touch and have an evening of fun, games, and, as usual, plenty of good food!
5. **Other Get Togethers:** The group usually arranges a destination spring camping trip. In past years, Arches, Zion, Dinosaur, and state parks have been some of the destinations.

Group Organization:

The GCWG is a 501(c)3 organization with bylaws and a 9 member board. At the Spring Members Meeting, the membership votes on a list of board candidates. These nominations have been made by the board. Nominations may also be made from the floor before the voting. A board member serves a three year term with a two term limit. Only board members may vote at board meetings. The board elects officers from the board. Board meetings are held four times a year and as needed. Other members are welcome to attend.

If you are interested in becoming more involved there is always a need for leadership. If an activity of interest already has a chairperson, you can assist and usually take over the next year.

Additional Information:

The Group communicates via Email. Therefore, it is important that we have your correct email, as well as your address and phone number, as backup. Changes should be sent to the Membership Chairperson as listed on the website. Members receive information on upcoming events, such as meetings, workdays, and other activities.

Dues are \$20 per household and collected anytime after September 1st and due by June 1st. The membership year is Jan. through Dec.

The GCWG website is www.gcwg.org. It contains contact information for officers, board members, and chairpersons, and video instruction on cabin hosting and trail ambassadorship. Besides the Emails you receive, the website is your source of information about the group and its activities.

A newsletter is mailed to members semi-annually.

Members are encouraged to volunteer at least 4 days a year.

Volunteer Hours:

The hours that a member works are counted, accumulated, and reported to the Forest Service. These hours are used by the Forest Service when requesting funding or applying for grants. The Forest Service district is regarded more favorably if it shows volunteer involvement.

Volunteer hours for group activities are collected and reported by the group organizer. Individual volunteer hours, such as trail ambassadorship, bluebird and osprey monitoring, registration box support, and planning and administration activities are submitted by the member to the Volunteer Hours coordinator on a quarterly bases.