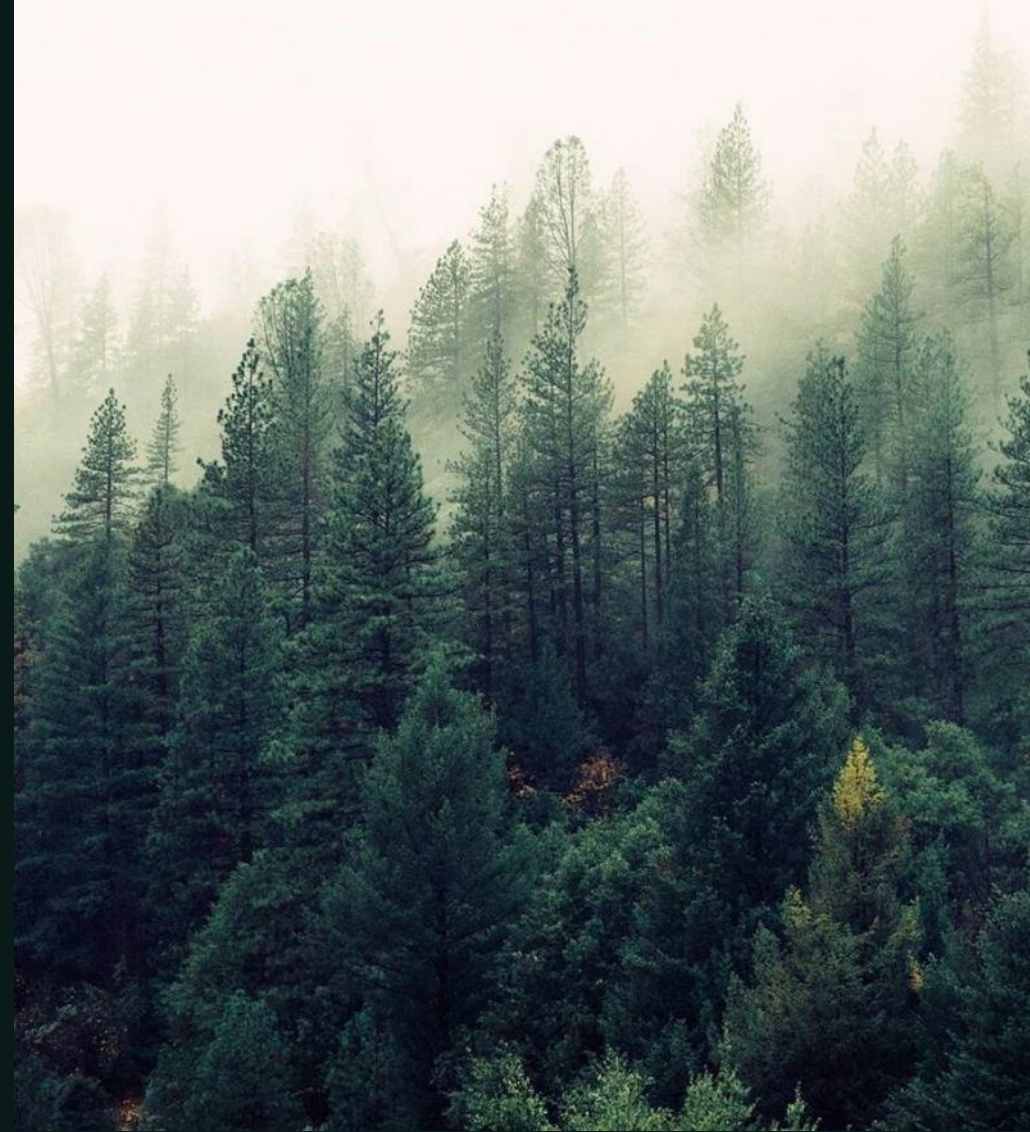


Grand County Wilderness Group Orientation



HOLLY WHITTEN



Agenda

Mission

History

Activities

Cabin Hosting

Wilderness Group led Orientation Hikes

Other Activities

Electronic Resources



Introduction

Grand County Wilderness Group Mission Statement: To assist the US Forest Service in the preservation, protection, improvement and public understanding of the wilderness areas in Grand County.





History

From humble
beginnings

History

GRAND COUNTY WILDERNESS GROUP

The Grand County Wilderness Group was formed in 1994 to assist the US Forest Service in preservation, protection, improvement and public understanding of the wilderness areas of Grand County

- The all-volunteer Group hosts cabins and trails, does maintenance work on trails, and disperses information at various community gatherings. All the while having a lot of good, healthy fun.

What is Wilderness

What Is Wilderness?



*Where wild things live...
Landscapes without roads...
A place to find solitude...
Open spaces to explore...*

Wilderness Is Many Lasting Things

Congress designates areas with unique primitive qualities as wilderness. Wilderness protects plant and wildlife communities, water resources, and wild spaces from an ever-expanding civilization. Help keep wilderness wild for present and future generations of Americans.

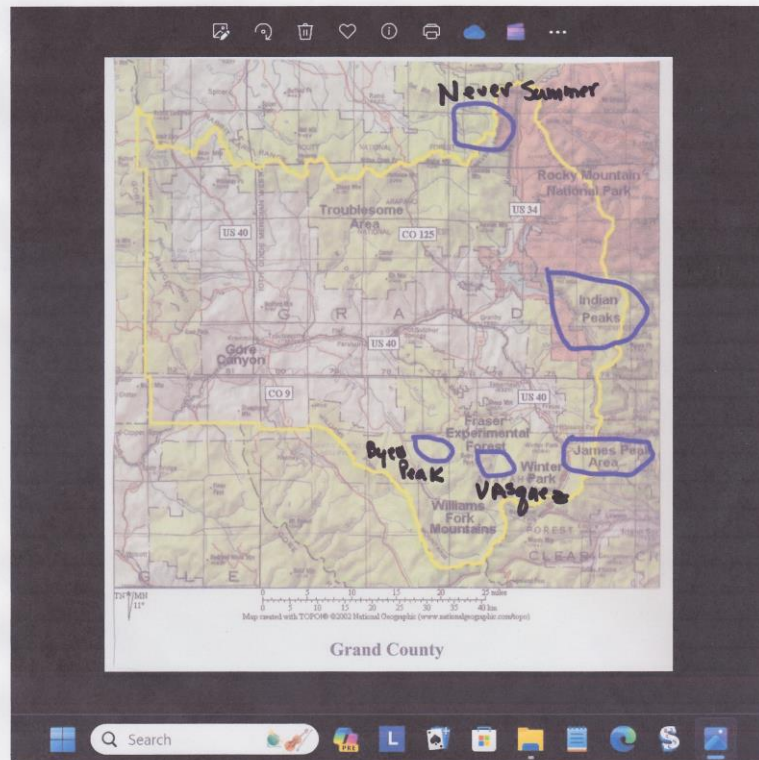


America's Enduring Resource



- The Wilderness Act, passed in 1964, founded the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS). To become part of the NWPS, federal lands have to be designated through an act of Congress.
- Wilderness areas are chosen based on four critical wilderness qualities: natural, untrammeled, undeveloped, and opportunities for solitude and recreation.

WHERE IS WILDERNESS IN GRAND COUNTY



- There are 4 Wilderness Areas in Grand County:
- Never Summer
- Indian Peaks
- Vasquez Peak
- Byers Peak
- James Peak is wilderness outside of Grand County

Never Summer Wilderness

- **Difficulty:** Moderate

Length: About 20 miles of trails, the 16.2-mile Bowen Gulch Trail being the most popular.

Access Points: Never Summer Wilderness can be accessed from Estes Park or from Grand County. The easiest entry is from Grand Lake. Take US Highway 34 north into Rocky Mountain National Park at the Kawuneeche Valley entrance. From there, follow Trail Ridge Road to the Bowen/Baker Trailhead to get to the most popular path through the Never Summer Wilderness.

- The most fascinating wilderness in the area is to the north, where ponds and bogs create rare habitats for creatures including wood frogs, bog bean, pygmy shrews, and even wolves. The area moisture that helps create these habitats also supports exceptionally large and old spruce and fir trees, the largest of which can get up to four feet in diameter, and the oldest of which is estimated at about 600 years old.

-

<https://www.visitgrandcounty.com/places-to-go/explore-wilderness-areas-trails/>

Indian Peaks Wilderness

Difficulty: All Levels

Length: 133 miles of trails with varied difficulty levels

Access Points: Indian Peaks Wilderness is a large wilderness area with multiple access points, but there are two more popular entry points—from Grand County or the Boulder/Nederland area.

Grand County Access Point: The most popular entry to the Indian Peaks Wilderness area from Grand County is at the Monarch Lake Trail, which circumnavigates Monarch Lake. From Granby, take US Highway 34 toward Grand Lake. Exit at the Arapaho Bay sign, and head about ten miles to Monarch Lake.

Description: Located mostly within the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests, Indian Peaks Wilderness encompasses 76,711 acres of lakes, streams, trails, and beautiful mountain peaks. About 16 miles of the Continental Divide lies within the area, and it even overlaps with Rocky Mountain National Park to the north. And with eight well-known peaks named after some of Native American tribes that used to live in the area, it's no wonder how the area got its name. Indian Peaks Wilderness was incorporated into the National Wilderness Preservation System in 1978.

While exploring the area, look for elk, moose, bighorn sheep, mountain goats, mountain lions, mule deer, black bears, or snowshoe rabbits to get a taste of some of the wildlife the area offers. Keep your eyes open for more than 280 species of birds, too!

<https://www.visitgrandcounty.com/places-to-go/explore-wilderness-areas-trails/>

Vasquez Peak Wilderness

Difficulty: Moderate – Difficult

Length: 17-mile long trail system

Access Points: Follow US-40 for 9.6 miles from the junction with I-70. Just before US-40 begins climbing toward Berthoud Pass there is a sharp turn with a sign for the Henderson Mine. Turn here and follow this road 1.75 miles to the Henderson Mine. Continue on a dirt road on the right side to a sizable parking area 0.5 miles further. Park. The dirt road continues on to the west towards Jones Pass. Several routes can be taken from here to ascend Vasquez Peak which lies almost directly north.

Vasquez Peak is one of the state's most recent wilderness areas. It is part of 100,000 acres of roadless terrain in the area, which includes the [Byers Peak Wilderness](#), the Fraser Experimental Forest, and the Williams Fork - Ptarmigan Peak roadless area.

Vasquez Peak is very close to the Indian Peaks and Eagles Nest wilderness areas, allowing visitors to enjoy amazing views of both mountain ranges without the ordinary hustle and bustle you have to deal with in other places.

The Vasquez Peak Wilderness area 17-mile long trail system above timberline including seven miles of the [Continental Divide National Scenic Trail](#) that runs through the area. Due to its high elevation, sudden summer thunderstorms can make exposure to lightning in the Vasquez Mountains a dangerous risk. Plan on hiking early and dropping in elevation into the trees before afternoon storms break.

As the elevation drops, you will enter a forest of Engelmann spruce, subalpine fir, lodgepole pine, and Krummholz, German for "twisted wood," which is the perfect description for these particular trees. In the summer, the Vasquez Peak Wilderness is known for an extensive system of Wildflowers. Take a hike and see Indian Paintbrush, White Bog Orchids, Tall Penstemon and more.

<https://www.visitgrandcounty.com/places-to-go/explore-wilderness-areas-trails/>

Difficulty: All Levels

Length: 23 Miles of Trails, various hikes and lengths

Access Points: There is an East and West access point: - See the web page for complete instructions

Established in 1993, Byers Peak Wilderness Area encompasses 8,801 acres within the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest in Grand County. Byers Peak Wilderness is home to a variety of different eco-zones due to drastic elevation changes within the area, which allow an assortment of flora, fauna and wildlife to live within the Byers Peak Wilderness boundaries.

There are two glacial lakes, three major creek drainages and two peaks over 12,500 feet within Byers Peak Wilderness. Byers Peak reaches the highest elevations with a summit of 12,804 feet accessible via the Byers Peak Trail. Byers Peak Wilderness contains 23 miles of trails offering panoramic views and some of the finest ridge hiking in the state. Views worth the effort are available from atop the peak itself, accessible via the Byers Peak Trail, a distance of 8.6 miles round-trip from the trailhead.

While hiking and sightseeing are the primary attractions, you can fish or fly fish in Lake Evelyn, St. Louis Lake and West St. Louis Creek. The only designated campground within the wilderness area, the Byers Peak Campground, has been closed indefinitely due to the beetle kill infestation, but camping most anywhere in the Byers Peak Wilderness is permitted; you must camp at least 100 ft. from a water source or a trail, and any human waste must be buried in a hole that's at least 8 - 10 inches deep, or double bagged and carried out. Everything that is packed in with you must be packed out.

Mule deer, elk, ptarmigan, and marmots are common sights, but the biggest lure is the peace and quiet that Byers Peak Wilderness provides to its visitors. Always use "Leave No Trace" techniques to help keep this area wild, clean, and pristine.

<https://www.visitgrandcounty.com/places-to-go/explore-wilderness-areas-trails/>

James Peak Protection Area

S.1711 - James Peak Wilderness, Wilderness Study, and James Peak Protection Area Act 107th Congress (2001-2002)

The James Peak Protection Area is a national protected area located in the state of Colorado, USA. It covers over 14,000 acres and is home to a diverse range of wildlife and plant species. Visitors to the area can enjoy a variety of outdoor activities such as hiking, fishing, camping, and wildlife viewing 1.

There is also a James Peak Wilderness area located within Boulder, Gilpin, and Clear Creek counties, which is adjacent to the Continental Divide on the eastern slope. The wilderness area includes several peaks over 13,000 feet and more than a dozen alpine lakes. Within its boundaries are 30 miles of trails.



The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing.

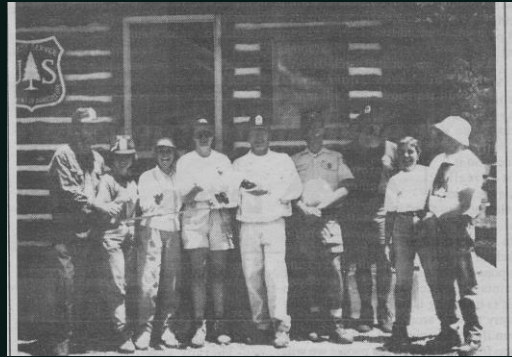
Walt Disney



Beginning People



Walt Bobb
Co-Founder - Chairman



1997 – Volunteers
Herd and Yvonne
Clark, Abb Deloach,
Ann Steers, Jim
Deloach, Roger Rood,
Bob Saint, Sue and
Marshall Haith



1999 Officers



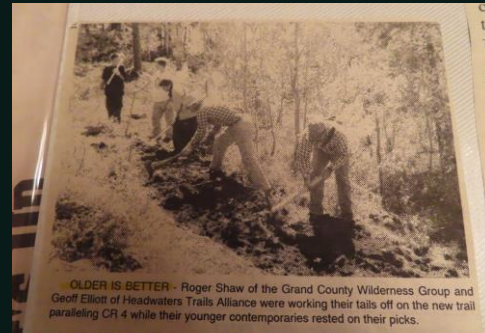
**Wilderness Act 50th
Anniversary**
Shaws, Jacksons,
Haiths, Manleys

Beginning Projects

No big deal, we like to hike anyway.
Here's our our simple survey results:
Statistically 7 couples reported on their wilderness at
Number hikers interviewed-442
Most used trail- Columbine-140 hikers
Least used- Never Summer range
Hiking dogs- 45
Dogs leashed-11
Overnighters- 106 -Bowen 15
Parked cars going in- 160
Parked cars going out- 232
Total Host hours- 348
Trail violations-very few

1996

Statistics

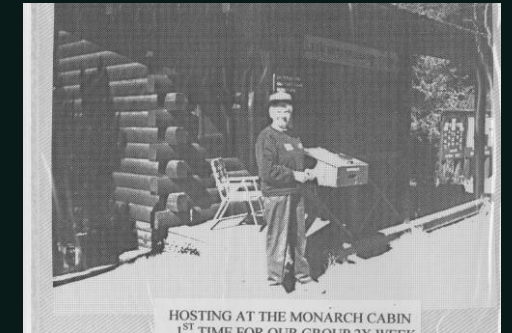


OLDER IS BETTER - Roger Shaw of the Grand County Wilderness Group and Geoff Elliott of Headwaters Trails Alliance were working their tails off on the new trail paralleling CR 4 while their younger contemporaries rested on their picks.

1996 GCWG
working with HTA
on new trail



Smokey



HOSTING AT THE MONARCH CABIN
1ST TIME FOR OUR GROUP BY WEEK

1996 First Monarch
cabin hosting

Activities

BEGINNING PEOPLE

From the beginning, this was a group of enthusiastic individuals working on various projects within the county.

BEGINNING PROJECTS

- Cabin Hosting
- Hiking
- Maintenance -
- Community Activities:
 - Art Affair
 - Smokey Bear – Christmas Tree
 - 4th of July
 - Buffalo Stampede
- Monofilament and BlueBird boxes
- Christmas Bird Count

Current Activities

HOW TO BE INVOLVED

Many of the original activities remain to work on today.

Take a look at the list and think about how you can contribute.

CURRENT PROJECTS

- Cabin Hosting
- Hiking –
- Trail Head Ambassadors
- Maintenance
- Community Activities:
 - Art Affair
 - 4th of July
 - Buffalo Stampede
 - Thursday Concerts – Winter Park
 - Thursday Concerts – Granby
- Bluebird boxes and monofilament
- Christmas Bird Count
- Spring Bird Walk
- Spring Camping
- Wilderness Monitoring

Cabin Hosting

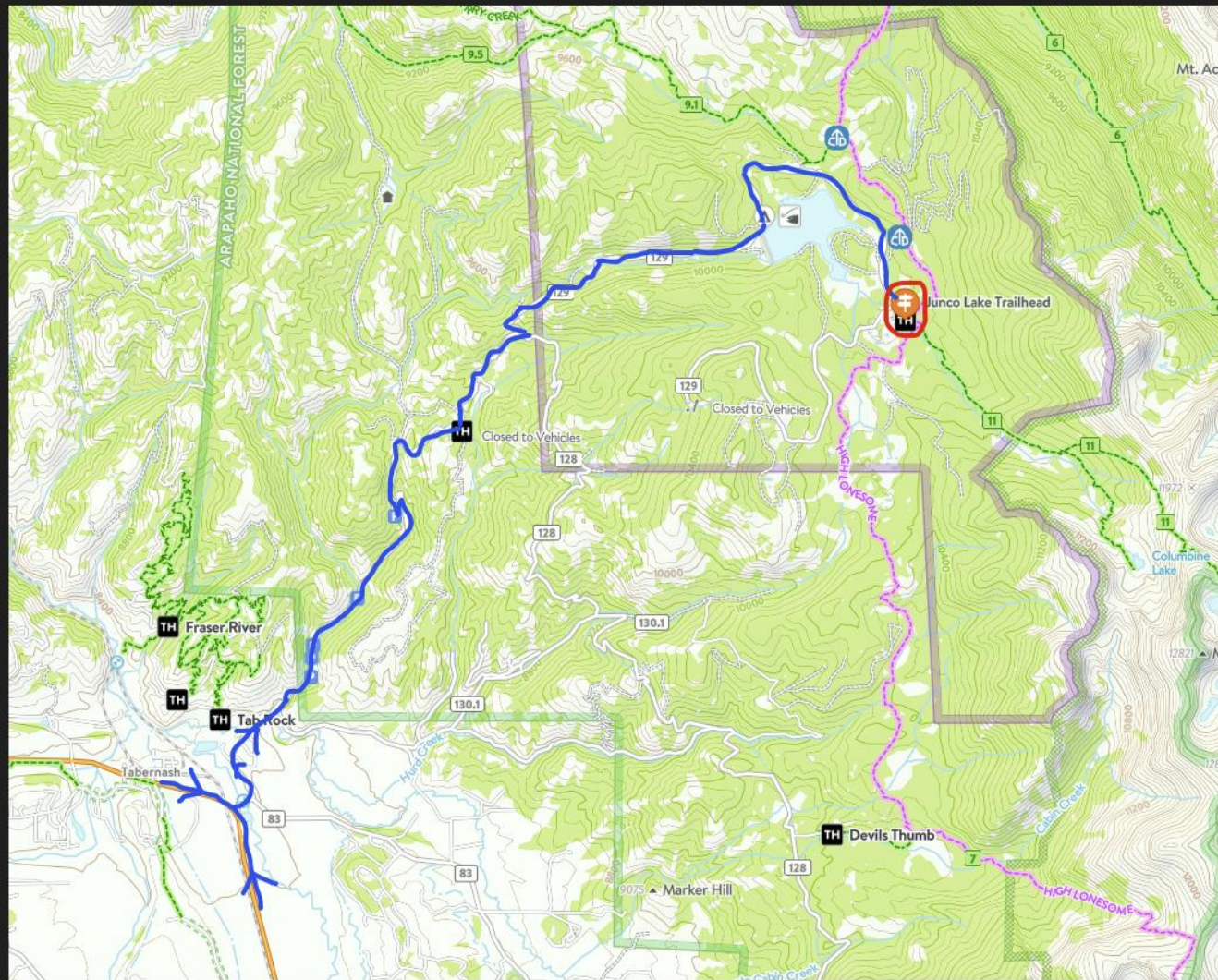
MONARCH CABIN

- Map
- Sign up at the Spring Meeting or on-line (demo)
- On-site training will be held - when
- General guidelines -
- How to sign up

JUNCO

- Map
- Sign up at the Spring Meeting or on-line (demo)
- On-site training will be held.
- General guidelines are a bit different. For example – dogs





General Notes for Cabin Hosting

- These are some generic guidelines to review when hosting either of the cabins. There will be specific training given at each cabin at the opening of the season. Members usually get an e-mail announcing these trainings. Dates vary depending on when the cabins can be opened. Keep an eye on GCWG.org in case you don't see an e-mail.
-
- Cabin hosting really isn't a scary activity --- it's FUN!!! Here are the basics:

If this is your first time to host a cabin, register with an experienced volunteer. You'll catch on very quickly after doing it once.

1. Wear your GCWG shirt, vest, hat, or volunteer badge so that you look "official".
2. There is a Handbook located in both of the cabins. Take a quick review to remind yourself of the guidelines for where you are hosting. If you have suggestions or corrections for the handbook, please call Toni Wujek, 887-9042. Do not update the pages yourself.
3. Greet guests with a smile.
4. Ask guests to sign in at the registration box. If they are reluctant, tell them the USFS uses it for management planning.
5. Encourage guests to view the information posted in the kiosks Suggest people take a phone photo of the map.
6. There are chairs in the closet. Use them to enjoy sitting on the porch or anywhere you have a view of the cabin.
7. If you leave the cabin unattended for any length of time, i.e., to take a walk, lock the cabin.

8. Remind hikers to carry water, suntan lotion, and insect repellent, and wear good footwear. If there is sun block, or insect repellent on the shelves behind the cabin desk, you may offer these to guests who did not bring their own.

9. There is NOT drinking water at either of the cabins. Bring your own!!! The closest drinking water to Monarch is at the Big Rock section of the Arapaho Bay Campground, which they passed on the way into Monarch Lake. There is nothing close to Junco. Do not offer any water from the cabin. You don't know how long it has been there.

10. There is a Lost and Found in both of the cabins. If a valuable item is turned in, such as a cell phone or camera, call the USFS and report it. (Once you get to where you cell phone works.) If someone reports something lost, enter the item, name, and contact information on the Lost Items notebook hanging on the Monarch cabin wall besides the desk. - Check Junco paperwork.

11. Familiar yourself with the books on the cabin shelves. They can be useful references for you. There is a copy of Deborah Carr's and Lou Ladrigan's book Hiking Grand County, Colorado on the desk that you can use to answer questions. This book is at both cabins.

12. When asked "Why can't I.....?", answer "For the protection of the wilderness."

We do not do law enforcement.

You can ask people who look like they are backpacking if they have a permit. They do not need to show you their permit. Tell them they need to carry the permit on them. (They should not leave it in the car.) If they leave their camp they should attach the permit to their tent. If they do not have a permit, they will have to go back down the road until they get cell phone reception, and try to get a permit at recreation.gov.

DOGS: - probably our biggest issue.

Dogs must be on a handheld leash. Electronic leashes do not qualify as handheld. Neither does “voice command”. There are stiff fines for violation of this rule. !!! Find the Arapaho National Forest “DOG” brochure.!!!

At Monarch, leashes are required around the Lake and also in the Indian Peaks Wilderness area. At Junco, dogs can be off leash in the parking area, but are required to be on the leash when they reach the Indian Peaks Wilderness area; about a mile up the trail.

In case of hiker injury, do not administer first aid. You may offer clean water from your water bottle and the small First Aid kit from the cabin. but let the guest take care of the injury. The training at each cabin will include instructions for severe injuries.

Enjoy your interactions. You represent the Grand County Wilderness Group and everyone who cares about wilderness.

Some Generic rules:

Firearms are allowed in Wilderness areas, but they cannot be fired over trails, streams, or lakes.

The use of drones is prohibited in Wilderness areas.

Answer questions as you can. If they need more information, give them the USFS phone number, 970-295-6600, but let them know they will probably get a recording - Press zero and it will send to a person during office hours (M-F 8:30-4:30) otherwise you will have to leave a message.

FS e-mail address is :

Ambassador Led Orientation Hikes

PARTICIPANT -

- How to sign up

LEADER

- Training **You can explain in your orientation that it will be a full day of training on communication and a review of the wilderness regulations. The goal is to help members feel confident and knowledgeable about approaching and engaging the public whether at a cabin, or on the trail.**
- How to sign up

GENERAL

- Leave no Trace

Other Activities

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

- Art Affair
- Thursday Concerts
- Newsletter Content
- Monofiliment
- Blue Birds
- Registration Boxes
- Other item
- How to sign up?

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

- How to participate –
More details will be
given at Spring meeting.

TRAIL MAINTENANCE

- Contact info - Board is
working on this.

Electronic Resources

WEB PAGE

- GCWG.org
- How to add
- contacts

FACEBOOK

- How to find
- Contact info

INSTAGRAM

- How to find
- How to submit
- Contact info



Summary

GCWG is a group of people who love and enjoy the wilderness.

We do our best to preserve and protect it as we participate in it and share it with others.

Welcome aboard.



Thank you

Holly Whitten

wpholly@aim.com

GCWG.org

