



# Grand County Wilderness Group Newsletter

Fall, 2011  
Www.GCWG.org



## Mission Statement

To assist the US Forest Service in the preservation, protection, improvement and public understanding of the wilderness areas in Grand County

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The Bi-annual Meeting, the Fall one, will be at the YMCA of the Rockies in the Summit Building: Adams Camp, our usual spot, on Sunday, November 13 , starting at 5:00 pm.

Our guest speaker will be Michele Simmons, District Interpreter at Rocky Mountain National Park. Topic: Rocky in Winter

Food assignments are as follows:

A through C - Side Dish

D through Meyer - Appetizer

Miller through Z - Dessert

Main dish will be provided.

Bring a drink to share

2012 dues will be collected at the meeting. \$15 per mailing address  
If you can't make the meeting, please see the last page for a mail form.

"Backcountry Skiing and Snowshoeing in Grand County, Colorado"

by Deborah Carr and Lou Ladrihan

will be on sale for \$5. Proceeds all go to GCWG

Thank you! Deborah and Lou

## Message from the President

What a great, busy summer we have had! Good participation by Grand County Wilderness Group at the trail “re-routing” of High Lonesome Trail. We joined several Forest Service workers in rerouting the trail around an ambitious beaver’s pond. Then, about a month later, we “decommissioned” a trail, to keep ATV and motorcycles from using it. Our turnout for Daisy Demolition was even bigger than last time! Finally, for National Public Lands Day, we participated in several projects involving trail improvement! Throughout the season, the TUTI team cleared over 300 trees along the Continental Divide and Bowen Gulch Trails. All of these achievements are quite impressive!!

COMING UP: You will be receiving a survey to determine how we can make our Grand County Wilderness Group better. Please complete it and return it, via email. We hope to review it by the fall meeting.

A special note of THANKS goes to Al Rothenbach. He has helped me extensively in assuming the job of President! I would not have been able to “take the helm” without his help. I really appreciate all of your help, Al! - Jim Magill

## USFS Report – Reid Armstrong

[Note: You may have seen some of Reid’s pieces in the SkyHi News. A journalism major, Reid is now on staff with the USFS]

Sulphur Ranger District has had an active season, performing general maintenance and tree clearing on more than 300 miles of trail in Grand County. Volunteers have played a key role in this effort through the Adopt-a-Trail program, National Public Lands Day and with the support of organizations such as the Grand County Wilderness Group. These efforts are paramount in helping keep National Forest System trails open to public use.

The district celebrated the completion of East Shore Trailhead with a ribbon cutting ceremony Sept. 22. Located within a

residential community in Grand Lake, the project turned what was a gravel pit into a welcoming portal to the National Forest, National Park and Continental Divide National Scenic Trail. A paved parking lot with landscaping and informational signage allows the trailhead to better blend with the surrounding neighborhood. Today, East Shore Trailhead offers bikes, horses, hikers and fishermen direct access from town to the places where they recreate.

Working with volunteers from the Continental Divide Trails Alliance and Grand County Wilderness Group, USFS crews completed reroute work this summer on a quarter-mile section of the Hi Lonesome Trail (part of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail). Several years ago, a colony of beaver constructed a dam above the reservoir on Meadow Creek which flooded the trail. Rather than remove the beaver colony, crews rerouted the trail out of the riparian area and built a bridge to reconnect with the old trail above the beaver dam.

Sulphur crews completed a reroute of the Williams Peak trail this summer. Following a beetle kill project by Henderson Mill that obliterated the old trail, the Forest Service was given permission to route a new trail connector on an easement through private land. As a result, the new singletrack trail travels through an area away from roads and entirely free of hazard-trees.

The ranger district also spent part of the summer decommissioning unauthorized trails in the Phases system near Strawberry Creek and Hurd Peak. Working closely with the community and the Bureau of Land Management, crews ripped and seeded illegal trails that have been used primarily by motorized dirt bikes and mountain bikes. These areas are being managed for wildlife habitat and provide some of the county’s most pristine elk calving grounds.

The mountain pine beetle epidemic left in its wake a canvas of dead and dying trees that pose a safety risk to Forest visitors, particularly those traveling at higher speeds on motorized

trails. This year, Sulphur Ranger District and the Arapaho Roosevelt National Forest committed some \$500,000 to pay contractors to remove hazard trees from more than 28 miles of motorized trails in the Stillwater and Kawuneeche areas. US Forest Service crews will remove hazard trees from an additional 7 miles of trail in the same areas as well as Arapaho Pass and Cascade Creek trails near Monarch Lake. Over the coming year, some \$1 million will be spent around the district to make popular Forest Service roads safer for vehicular traffic.

### **Missing A Newsletter?**

There never was a spring GCWG newsletter since your editors were recovering from an auto accident along with GCWG members Marshall and Janette. We hit black ice on a sunny but very windy day up north. Ron Sears and Barton Phillips were the first to rescue us.

Hospitalizations and surgeries followed. We all survived and have been back to our favorite Grand County trails. Thanks to everyone for all their assistance and good wishes in the healing process. Roger, Joan, Janette and Marshall

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Jim was stopped by the police around 1 a. m. and asked where he is going at this time of night. Jim replied, "I am going to a lecture about alcohol abuse and the effects it has on the human body." The officer then asked, "Really? Who is giving that lecture at this time of night?" Jim replied, "That would be my wife."

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### **Summer At Dear Ole Monarch Cabin**

This historic and beautiful spot on our planet was officially staffed on June 5. Snow was still a detriment to some hikers and it wasn't until June 23<sup>rd</sup> that anyone got to Cascade Falls. On July 16 Crater Lake still had one foot of snow. By the 18<sup>th</sup> mosquitoes were so thick that several visitors turned back according to Harry Kottcamp and the Shuracks. Even the llamas had trouble getting round Buchanan pass.

A big "HI" from Sue Kinzer who hosted the most last year. Breena from the USFS was the primary hostess this summer with our GCWG

volunteering several days a week. She reported a wedding there, as well as many animal sightings. Moose came frequently, otters frolicked by the standing dead tree in the lake, mink and pine marten scampered around and Carol and Bill Shurak reported a bear when they hosted on August 15<sup>th</sup>. A 24 inch brown trout was caught that day and avoided being the bear's dinner. Many canoes enjoyed the serenity of the lake and we know of only one that tipped over.

NSCD kids enjoyed a day of canoeing. The cabin was used and appreciated during a rainstorm according to hosts George and Pam Armstrong. A disoriented dog swam in the cold water and got rescued by some Missourians. Hypothermia set in but a life blanket revived him.

News greater than weather, increased visitors, or animal friends were the use and thanks for the newest addition to Monarch, the Adventure Packs. See separate article.

Thanks to Toni Wujik and Al Rothenbach for orienting 7 new members to staff this cabin. May all your days here be golden ones.,

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[ Are you old enough to remember this tune?]  
When you swim in the sea  
and an eel bites your knee,  
that's a moray.

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### **That Great Annual Double A Barn Picnic**

Ron Sears, affectionately known as the hog roaster, delighted all who attended the annual picnic at the AA barn in August just as he did the year before. Delicious aromas wafted for miles. Ron made the portable roaster 30 years ago and averages 4 to 5 parties a year with his creation. He has been cooking for 34 years. Once he fed 350 at a wedding. The pork and beef smoked for hours and delighted everyone.

His wife Jan said "He is a man of all kinds of talents in many areas." We heartily thank him for his work. Thanks, too, to everyone else who brought the rest of a delicious dinner. No moose attended this year but elegant herons watched us.

## Junco Cabin

July 2 was Opening Day at Junco Cabin featuring marsh marigolds as they bloomed amidst the wetlands. Al and Toni hosted on the July 3 with “more visitors and hikers than New York City.” Travel was restricted since the lake was frozen and one had to posthole to get near it. Summer did occur so 9 members of our group and 3 USFS lifted logs to make a bridge over the marsh. The parking lot was full most of the summer with happy hikers seeing moose and porcupines and zillions of wild flowers. Backpacking permits were issued, maps sold and ANRA passes as well. Free advice was plentiful.

The window was replaced in the cabin by our brave president, Jim Magill. Those volunteering to host found they were appreciated for their efforts. Andersons, Kitts and Thompsons hosted twice. Plus—Smith-Potter, Shaws, Whittons, Shirley, Harts, VonderHaar-Papathakis, Meyers, Armstrongs, Braddys, Clairs, Hogans, Jacksons, Magill-Collins, Millikens, Hunters, Jamisons, Rothenbach-Wujek and JPH. Thanks for driving that memorable road and smiling afterwards.

Next year remind people that their passes must show their signature and expiration date in their car window.



### Thanks, Mike!

Mike Ricketts, our good friend and contact in the Forest Service as GCWG has been growing and adding projects, is retiring. Thanks, Mike, for all of your help and may your new ventures bring you much happiness.

### Welcome! New Members - Mary Bernard

Jane Abbott  
Pam and George Armstrong  
Tim and Wanda Barrett  
Roger and Marsha Bartholomew  
Brendon Beaver  
Dave and Marilyn Binkley  
Annette Charnecki  
Dede Fay and Dave Batura

John and Cathy Hart  
Lyn Hull  
Bob and Barbara Janes  
Nicky Kenney  
David and Doris Klein  
James Leveridge  
Dan and Renita McGrail  
Llobd and Sheila Milliken  
Dan Nolan and Marilyn Hunter  
Jerry and Barbara Pollack  
Roxanne Singler  
Dick and Carolyn Sunderland  
Tom Papathakis and Lisa VonderHaar  
David and Susan Wilkinson

Wow! It is really impressive to see how many care about our wild lands and trails. If you are at our fall meeting, please have someone point out the old folks who put the newsletter together and come say “Hello”. We may not remember you the next time but we’d love to meet you both times!

If you know of anyone interested in joining the GCWG, have them check our website for information or pick up a new member brochure at the meeting. Pass out our “business” card and welcome them with open arms and hiking boots. Mary reports 150 members in our group. More is not only merrier but better for our environment. It is nice to know WHO CARES to be of service and keeps Grand County grand.

### Get Your Shirts And Caps Here

T-shirts and Hats available! We have a new batch of hats in both colors, blue and khaki. The hats were a big seller at the Art Affair this summer. Thanks to all who volunteered to work at the booth. We made a little over \$300 which was a record amount. Need a new T-shirt? hat? sweatshirt? golf shirt? Call Joyce Clair at 887-9097. Delivery service available. Joyce is looking for someone to take over this easy fundraising job for the GCWG. Ordering is easy with Active Images T-shirt shop in Winter Park doing all the printing and, with only 2 meetings a year, it's a breeze! Please consider taking on this fun job to help GCWG.

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The early bird might get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.

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### **Audubon Bird Count**

This event will be coming up in December under the leadership of Brock McCormick. Watch for details on our website and sign on for an interesting and educational winter adventure.

### **Our Spring '11 Camping Trip**

by Toni Wujek

Eighteen members of the Wilderness Group rushed to meet spring by traveling 370 miles south to Bandelier National Monument in May. The Monument is near Los Alamos, N.M., and 45 miles from Santa Fe. We spent three nights camping there, and two days hiking the 70 miles of trails in this fascinating archeological area. Our group camp was spacious, so we had plenty of room to pitch our tents where no one else would hear us snore. We enjoyed healthy portions of delicious tacos and barbeque for our suppers. Participants donated a lot of pine-beetle-killed firewood, so we had roaring fires every evening to keep us cozy. Lyn Hull played her guitar and led us in singing around the fire, and John Schmitt joined in with a fiddle accompaniment when appropriate. We must have sounded good, because a group of college kids, a geology class on a field trip, who were camping in the other group camp across the road, came over and joined us each evening.

The weather smiled favorably on us. Our spring trips are usually cursed with wind, but this time the wind was manageable – we didn't have to nail down the outhouse. Each day, there was an option for a shorter or longer hike, with time left over to explore the ruins the Monument preserves. The longer hikes included a 7.5 mile route from our campground down Frijoles Canyon to the Bandelier Visitor's Center, and a 5 mile hike from the Visitor's Center down to the Rio Grande river. Both groups did a 2 mile hike around the Tsankawi cliff dwellings. This is an

unexcavated site, but the traces that remain of the inhabitants, including footholds worn in the rocks, give a very good impression of what life at this site must have been like.

Many thanks to the trip organizers, Beth Collins, Jim Magill, and Ed and Sue Jackson. When everyone has fun and eats well, and no one gets wet or freezes, you can call the trip a success!

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I just got off the phone with Joyce in Grand Lake She said that since early this morning the snow has been falling and it's nearly waist deep. The temperature is dropping below zero and the north wind is increasing. Her husband has done nothing but look through the kitchen window all day. She says that if it gets much worse, she may have to let him in.

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### **Plaid Day A Howling Success**

Next time you see someone wearing a short sleeve red tee shirt featuring a howling wolf, be sure and thank them for their work on National Public Lands Day. (PLD) This national event started in 1994 and Grand County has participated in every one since. All have been ACCIDENT FREE. The purpose is to encourage local communities to take ownership in their public lands and is sponsored by the National Environmental Education Foundation and the National Forest Service.

BJ Duffy, USFS organizer, brought together all the events so we had many choices to participate in this September. Her splendid report told of 187 volunteers averaging 8 hours each and the estimated cost savings for related agencies of \$32,319. The time savings for staff was 8.5 weeks.

She expressed her appreciation to all including the 114 businesses who donated, food, equipment services and transportation. Volunteers amassed all the food and goody bags, set up tables, helped with registration, the party afterwards and so much more. The goody bags had the colorful PLD shirts, free samples, advice, plus a free fee coupon good for public land centers.

The kickoff Friday night featured a new documentary "Green Fire" which many of us recommend that you see sometime as it makes the rounds nationally. This one hour film is based on the life and work of Aldo Leopold.

You can see the results on Flume Trail where 35 people, including some of our own, created 70 feet of turnpike, added 500' of new trail, seeded and rehabbed an old trail plus added 10 new water bars. Stillwater Campground had the youngest worker, a two year old helping with the plantings of 200 lodgepole and 50 spruce trees, plus watering 250 young trees. Hurd Creek trail got rerouted and the old one rehabbed. Colorado River Cleanup had 32 volunteers cleaning 15 miles where they took out 350 lbs. trash including 150 lb. of scrap metal.

The oldest volunteer was Ellen Shackelford, age 82, who helped construct the original bridge at Blizzard Pass years ago. She came back swinging a new Pulaski and, with the help of her team, built the replacement bridge.

Most of our GCWG members worked on the Bowen Connector that crosses the RMNP into Bowen Gulch in the Never Summer Wilderness, 100' of turnpike was added plus a 20' log stream crossing. Log checks and drains were added and a double trail made into a single one. Over 30 people worked with the same attitude of Stephen Lee who said "This was fun. It was good to have 2 teenagers from our high school helping, too."

Plan on helping with this project next year on Sept. 29<sup>th</sup>. It truly was an "awesome success" in the words of BJ Duffy, the super organizer.

### **Christmas Tree Time is Almost Here**

Each year GCWG aids the USFS by donning the outfit or assisting Smoky Bear along the tree cutting route behind Winter Park. Check the website [www.GCWG.org](http://www.GCWG.org) for details.

### **TUTI Team Tackles Tons Of Tree**

Beth Collins and Jim Magill

This past summer, TUTI (Totally Unauthorized Trail Improvement) team

members worked on clearing trails in the National Forest. Roger Shaw led TUTI teamers - Joan Shaw, Jim Magill, Beth Collins, Al Rothenbach, Toni Wujek, Joyce and Jim Clair, Pat Hogan, Bud Crawford, Lisa Vonderhaar, Tom Papatthakis, Ann Steers and Bob Saint. Captain Roger provided an array of hand saws for use in Wilderness Areas. None of those heavy, gas guzzling chain saws there. Teamers used little pruners, an array of bow saws, and big two-person cross-cut saws. We became so familiar with our tools that they were affectionately referred to Little Red, Orange Bow, Big Boy etc. There were plenty of trees to clear from trails blocked by those dead fallen and blown down which made the trails difficult to hike and, in some places, the multiple, mish-mash of trees made the trails impassable.

The first trail attacked was the Bowen Gulch Trail from the NFS boundary to the trail to Blue Lake. Some of the encampment campers took two days and cleared 187 trees from that trail. Hikers commented on how wonderful it was to hike the cleared trail. They also noted how difficult the hiking trail was beyond our end point.

The biggest project was clearing Knight Ridge Trail from Arapahoe Bay to Twin Creek Cabin. TUTI teamers made five attempts/assaults on that trail which is part of the Continental Divide Trail system. TUTI-ers started twice from the A-Bay campground trailhead and cleared trees on the first two miles of the trail. On the next two trail days, Ron Sears then came to our rescue by ferrying us on his boat across Lake Granby to mid-trail. This saved us about two hours hiking time.

Members enjoyed the lovely boat rides and – SURPRISE: Ron had refreshments including brats, salad, drinks, and soothing music awaiting us at the end of the day's trail work.

What a life! The last trip started at Twin Creek cabin and went back toward the A-Bay trailhead. Some teamers enjoyed an overnight and made it a two day forest foray.

The Bad News: Even though over 300 trees were cleared from Knight Ridge trail, there still

remains an uncleared segment at the top of the Ridge. The Good News: Job Security. There is plenty of trail work left to be done. Mark your calendars or sign up with either of us or Roger for next summer. Join us for outdoor exercise, lots of fun and a great sense of accomplishment. P.S. You don't have to be a muscle-man to help clear trails. There are little branches to be cut-off, trails that need to be brushed out, and the very important job of "ballast" out on the end of a tree to open the cut. Now that's living!

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"Use passion in a positive way. Don't let it foster anger" Susan Hand, member of the Great Ole Broads for Wilderness

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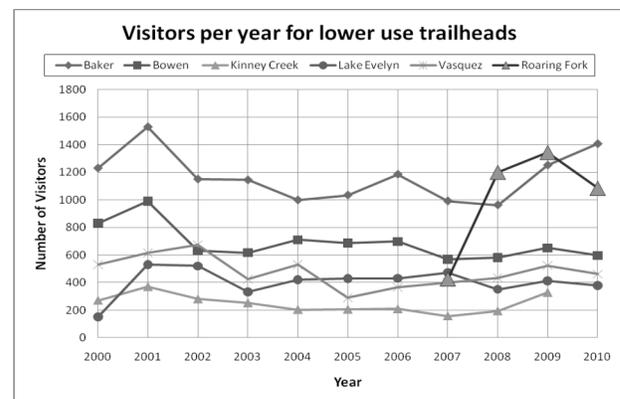
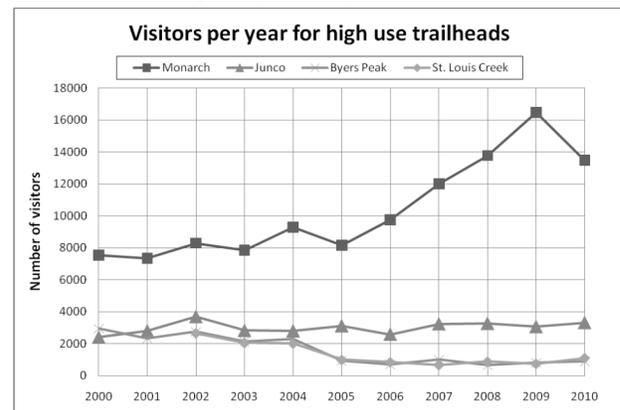
### What Daisies?

Daisy Day was another success as a large group of volunteers plucked the invasive species at Monarch Lake. Beth Collins led the group with assistance from the USFS experts. They eradicated and made a difference. This yearly event has obvious results. Native wildflowers are now abundant around the lake with plenty of room to prosper. Lunch of delicious gazpacho soup is now a new tradition for this meaningful project. All in favor said "Aye."

### Registration Box Report

Roger Shaw, coordinator and the team:  
 The Powers – St. Louis Lake and Byers Peak  
 Susan Ellis – Baker Gulch  
 The Bartholmews – Bowen Gulch  
 The Rothenbach and Wujek Team - Junco  
 VonderHaar & Papatkakis – Roaring Fork  
 The Bernards – Vasquez  
 Jeanine Elsener - Monarch Lake  
 Janet Swanby – Lake Evelyn  
 The 2011 season just closed Oct. 1 so that report is not ready yet. Since we didn't get a chance to tell you about 2010 in the past non-issue, here's a quick summary:  
 Monarch Lake continues as our most popular trailhead by far but the upward trend of the last

4 years was reversed this year. Some other trails showed modest drops but, generally, trail use continued pretty steady.



Bernards will pick up a new trailhead next season, Devils Thumb, so we're looking for an adopter for the Vasquez location. Could it be you??

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What did the mother buffalo say to her boy as he left for school? "Bison".

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### GCWG 2011 Logging School

- Ron Sears

On Monday August 8 the GCWG hosted a four day logging school led by Roger Shaw. The goal of the school was to train members in the techniques of old fashioned hand saw tree cutting for the purpose of trail clearing.

The school was a great success with over 180 trees cleared from the trail. Everyone returned with all their fingers intact.

The logging school was originally scheduled as our 2011 Encampment but the thought of clearing hundreds of trees from the trail with hand saws quickly seemed much more exciting.

OK, let's be honest: August 8 did begin our encampment and the logging was done the last day and a half by about half the group, the half with a passion for such work. Our trip began near the entrance to the Betty Dick property in the National Park. This year's participants were Roger Shaw, Mike Braddy, Al Rothenbach, Toni Wujek, Beth Collins and Jim Magill, and Ron Sears.

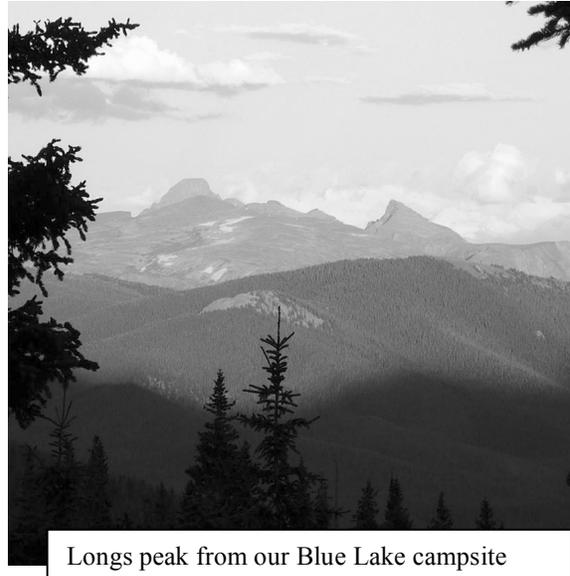


For the first time our senior memories can remember, the encampment days were perfect weather with no rain or snow. We hiked on the new portion of the CDT that begins in the National Park and then goes into the Never Summer Wilderness via the Bowen Gulch area. We chose the fork that took us up to Blue Lake where we made camp for three nights. The second day we tried to follow the trail described in the Carr-Ladrigan book but actually created our own trail up to the ridge above Blue Lake, where the end of the ridge is called Mineral Point. Some of the group actually went on over the ridge.

The third day the group split into the logging school and the explorers. Roger led Jim and Beth [who were actually seasoned loggers by this time] back to the main trail to start cutting

fallen trees and the rest of the group hiked up to an old mine with Toni and Al continuing on up to Bowen Gulch. The logging group camped near the main trail and continued their logging operation the next day.

Our entertainment consisted of beautiful views of Longs peak and the southern half of Rocky Mountain NP, views of Grand Lake, a large herd of elk watching us at sunrise from the top of the ridge, a moose detaining us for about 45



minutes on the trail, Roger carving himself a wooden spoon (to replace the one he forgot) and, the highlight of the trip, playing "Recovering Jim's Lost Items". This game began the first day with the loss of his GPS, his fleece jacket, and his Steri Pen used for purifying water. By the end of the trip, all items were recovered except the fleece jacket.

On the second evening it was decided to make a motion at the next GCWS meeting to change the encampment bed time from 9 pm to 8 pm since each year it seems more and more difficult to force ourselves to stay up until 9. (This was partly due to not having Joan Shaw on the trip to keep us entertained in the evenings).

It was a wonderful trip and we're sure the hikers on that trail for the rest of the summer were quite pleased with Roger, Beth and Jim's work in clearing almost 200 downed trees.

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## **ANNUAL DUES FORM**

Please send this form with your dues check to Jim Bernard, Treasurer, PO Box 2258, Fraser, CO 80442

Make checks payable to Grand County Wilderness Group

Dues for 2011: \$15.00 per mailing address

New Member? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Name of member(s) \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

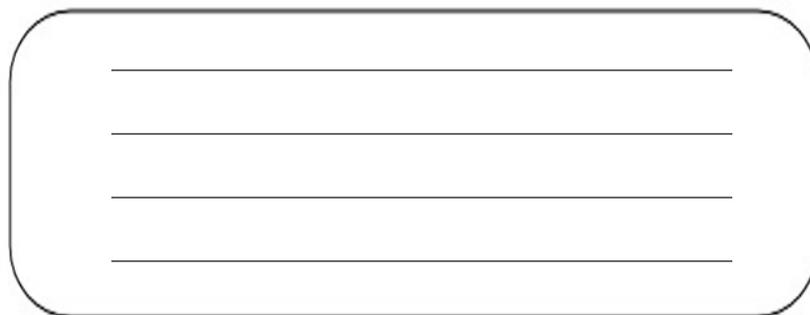
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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Grand County Wilderness Group  
PO Box 2200  
Fraser, CO 80442



A rounded rectangular box with a thin black border, containing four horizontal lines. This is a common design for a signature line or a stamp area on a document.