

Grand County Wilderness Group



Spring Issue 2016

www.gcwg.org

Letter from the President

We are now in the midst of planning our activities for this coming summer after a very successful summer last year with the increased level of weekend activity at the Monarch Lake Cabin. Thanks, again, to all of you that so generously volunteered last year to help protect the Wilderness Areas of Grand County and deal with what seems like an exponential growth in activity and popularity of our precious and fragile wilderness. We will again be hosting the Monarch Lake Cabin on Friday, Saturday and Sunday (also the Monday holidays) and the Junco Cabin on Saturday and Sunday this summer. The procedures for issuing backcountry permits, ANRA passes and communication with the Forest Service have been improved. In addition, we are trying a new activity of trailhead hosting (see the article in this newsletter). Remember we are now requesting that each member participate in four, one-day work activities per year.

To improve our skills and confidence with engaging with the public, our Wilderness Training session on Saturday, May 28th will include a six step process facilitated by our Regional Wilderness Manager, Ralph Swain. I encourage everyone to attend this important update.

We are now offering personalized name tags so that your interaction with the public can be even more professional. The board has also approved the purchase of Cathole Trowels. These will be available for sale to encourage wilderness users to properly dispose of solid human waste.

I would also like to emphasize our Trail Hosting role this summer. Every time we hike the trails in the National Forest we should be wearing our volunteer t-shirts and badges. We should engage with our fellow hikers with a friendly greeting and provide information, minor assistance, or a reminder concerning rules, if needed. We'll also have some trail maintenance activities which will include more work on the Columbine Trail re-route, building registration boxes and kiosks in early May, and more Wilderness kiosk sign installations in the Vasquez Peak Wilderness and possibly Indian Peaks Wilderness. Details and dates on these types of activities will be available when the FS summer staff gets here starting in April. I would like to thank Holly Whitten for her work with the advocacy subgroup "Voice of the Wilderness". She has been tireless in her research with the Forest Service, Colorado Parks & Wildlife and others to prepare maps, thoughtful comments and suggestions for us to use in our individual comments to the Forest Service and others, especially on the recent "Smart Sizing Trails" proposal for the Winter Park/Fraser area and throughout the county. There will be more work to do in this area in the future. *(continued on Page 2)*

Upcoming events

- 5/21 - 9/11:** Monarch Lake Cabin Hosting
Friday/Saturday/Sunday
- 6/25 - 9/11:** Junco Lake Cabin Hosting, Saturday
and Sunday
- 6/21 - 8/30:** Orientation Hikes, Tuesdays
- 4/10:** Spring Members Meeting and Potluck,
YMCA Snow Mt. Ranch, Rowley Room
- 5/6 - 5/7:** Registration Box & Kiosk
Construction, USFS Shadow Mountain Work
Center
- 5/9 - 5/12:** Spring Camping Trip, near
Canyonlands National Park
- 5/23:** Spring Birding Trip, Arapaho National
Wildlife Refuge
- 5/28:** Wilderness Stewardship Training
- 6/11:** Monarch Lake Cabin Hosting Orientation
- 6/ 25:** Trailhead Hosting, North Supply
- 7/4:** Granby Parade
- 7/9:** Trailhead hosting , Devil's Thumb
- 7/9:** Junco Lake Cabin Hosting Orientation
- 7/9:** Joan Shaw Memorial Junco Lake Trailhead
Kiosk Dedication
- 7/16:** Trailhead Hosting, Keyser Creek/Lake
Evelyn
- 7/16 - 7/17:** Winter Park Alpine Art Affair
- 7/23:** Trailhead Hosting, Byers Peak
- 7/30:** Trailhead Hosting, Kenney Creek
- 7/31 - 8/1:** Wilderness Volunteers Roaring Fork
Trail
- 8/4:** Daisy Demolition Day, Meet at 9:00 am at
Monarch Lake
- 8/7:** Annual Picnic, 5:30 pm at Forest Service
Double AA Barn
- 8/13:** Trailhead Hosting – Roaring Fork
- 8/20:** Trailhead Hosting - Vasquez
- 8/22- 8/26:** Encampment
- 8/27:** Trailhead Hosting – St. Louis Lake
- 9/24:** National Public Lands Day

Check in for new opportunities throughout the year.

ARE YOU REPORTING YOUR VOLUNTEER HOURS?

Check out the Volunteer Hours Report below. This shows the variety of activities for which you should be reporting hours. Toni is quite sure that not everyone is reporting all of their hours. Each hour is valuable as it gives the Forest Service matching hours for grants. Even if we were missing some hours we reported 490 hours more than last year.

GRAND COUNTY WILDERNESS GROUP / VOLUNTEER HOURS / 2015

Activity 2015 1st Quarter	Male	Female	Total Hours	Activity 2015 2nd Quarter	Male	Female	Total Hours
Administrative	191.5	106.5	298	Administrative	122.25	10	132.25
Education			0	Education	24	53	77
			0				0
Junco Cabin - Prep/Host			0	Junco Cabin - Prep/Host	36	36	72
Monarch Cabin - Prep/Host			0	Monarch Cabin - Prep/Host	187	178.5	365.5
Trail Work	2		2	Trail Work	172	83	255
Trail Hosting			0	Trail Hosting	62.5	59.5	122
Registration Boxes		122.25	0	Registration Boxes	8.5	5.5	14
			0				0
Bird Counts			0	Bird Counts			0
Osprey Monitoring			0	Osprey Monitoring	12	14	26
Bluebird Box Maint/Monit			0	Bluebird Box Maint/Monit			0
Monofilament			0	Monofilament	1.5	1.5	3
				Forest Service Office		38	38
Totals	193.5	228.75	300	Totals	625.75	479	1104.75

Activity 2015 3rd Quarter	Male	Female	Total Hours	Activity 2015 4th Quarter	Male	Female	Total Hours
Administrative	33.75	3	36.75	Administrative	57	28.5	85.5
Education	53	85.5	138.5	Education	79	70	149
			0				0
Junco Cabin - Prep/Host	193	194	387	Junco Cabin - Prep/Host			0
Monarch Cabin - Prep/Host	344.5	349	693.5	Monarch Cabin - Prep/Host			0
Trail Work	196	189	385	Trail Work			0
Trail Hosting	357	481.5	838.5	Trail Hosting			0
Registration Boxes	10	10	20	Registration Boxes	27	26	53
Forest Service Office		28	28				
Bird Counts			0	Bird Counts	15	15	30
Osprey Monitoring	4	5	9	Osprey Monitoring			0
Bluebird Box Maint/Monit			0	Bluebird Box Maint/Monit			0
Monofilament	5.5	6.5	12	Monofilament			0
Lynx Habitation	8.5		8.5				
Totals	1205.25	1351.5	2556.75	Totals	178	139.5	317.5

Total Volunteer Hours / Year-To-Date

4279
\$91,399.44

Nich has reported – “Thanks Toni, This is much appreciated. We use these numbers as match on grants and we received a \$27,700 grant for Wilderness this year so it is important to us. Thanks, I know it is a lot of work to put this information together.”

Congratulations to all who worked. SEND your hours to Toni.

Letter from the President (continued from page 1)

See the schedule of events in this newsletter, and check the Website for updates on the summer's activities when the dates are confirmed. Be sure and attend the Spring Members Meeting on Sunday, April 10th at the YMCA Snow Mountain Ranch where, along with the fun and fellowship, we will start the sign-up process for the Cabin Hosting, Trailhead Hosting, and the other summer activities.

I'm looking forward to another busy and productive summer.

Save the Date!

Saturday, May 28th

9:00am – 12:30pm

St. Louis Creek Campground

Wilderness Stewardship Training

- **WISDOM Training – Public Contacts and Wilderness Advocacy – Ralph Swain, USFS Region 2 Wilderness Program Manager**
- **Wilderness Rules and Regulations Refresher – Why so Many Rules? - Nick Schade, USFS Sulphur Ranger District**
- **Clearing Wilderness Trails – Safe and Practical Handsaw Use – Miles Miller, USFS Sulphur Ranger District**



Daisy Demolition

Summer is on its way. Please mark your calendars for the annual Daisy Demolition. The date is Thursday August 4th. GCWG will continue the fight against invasive species near Monarch Lake. In addition to weeding (and eating), Doreen Sumerlin and the Forest Service crew will inform participants about the harm invasive species cause to the native wild flower population and about the local wild flowers that we are protecting. New this year (in addition to a delicious gazpacho lunch) is a wildflower identification contest with a hearty round of applause for those who can identify 10 species. You can bring your favorite wild flower book. Sign up starts at that April annual meeting or call Beth Collins [970-726-5423](tel:970-726-5423).



Christmas Bird Count

A record number of **54** volunteers counted a record of **53** different bird species and **2756** individual birds on December 19, 2015. Two feeder watch volunteers also contributed to the count. This year's highlights included a northern goshawk and sharp-shinned hawk; and very rare sightings of western meadowlark, western kingbird, varied thrush, northern flicker, white-crowned sparrow and tremendous patience and tenacity in identifying a distant flock of 80 Bohemian waxwings.



Trail Head Hosting Opportunity

In the past few years we have seen an alarming trend of overuse and rule violation in our Wilderness Areas, especially at the popular lakes' camping areas. Crater Lake in the Indian Peaks Wilderness and Bowen Lake in the Never Summer Wilderness have been particularly hard hit. At Crater Lake, there are specified camping sites and no fires are allowed with violations on a regular basis. At Bowen Lake, the "no camping within 100 feet of lakes, streams and trails" rule is often abused. In all areas, human waste and toilet paper disposal is an unsightly and increasing problem.

Because of the changing demographics of our group, we are no longer able to adequately fulfil the original mission of backcountry trail and campsite monitoring and hosting. Working with Nick Schade at the Forest Service, we have decided to try something new this summer. On a trial basis, we would like to expand our engagement with the public at the Monarch Lake and Junco Lake cabins, to include trailhead hosting at other popular trailheads in the Wilderness Areas of Grand County. The Forest Service will provide us with a table, chairs, signage and literature to hand out. We've identified eight different popular trailheads that we will attempt to obtain volunteers of at least two people each on eight different Saturday mornings throughout the summer. We will expect you to be at the trailhead from 8:00 am until noon to hopefully reach most of the backpackers that will be heading into the backcountry that day. GCWG volunteers will be expected to engage with the public and inform hikers and backpackers about the opportunities in the area, as well as the backcountry rules, especially on camping, that should be followed to preserve the wilderness characteristics that we want to keep for the future. We also intend to sell Cathole Trowels this year to encourage people to follow proper human disposal techniques. Because this is a trial, we'll also need to keep records on how many and what kinds of people we encounter, and how effective this effort is. In future years we will refine and modify this program to be the most effective and directly reach the right people.

The following are the trailheads and dates we have selected for this trial: North Supply (Bowen Lake) – June 25th, Devil's Thumb – July 9th, Keyser Creek/Lake Evelyn – July 16th, Byers Peak – July 23rd, Kenny Creek – July 30th, Roaring Fork – August 13th, Vasquez – August 20th, St. Louis Lake – August 27th

There will be more information and an opportunity to sign up to participate in this trial at our April 10th Spring Members Meeting.

Like us on Facebook!

<https://www.facebook.com/grandcountywildernessgroup>

Totems to the Solstice



Subtle blue shadows on the snow, cast by the low winter sun, bring a hush to the woods and bless my spirit.

Quietude drifts through the advancing twilight as the ancient Pause approaches.

Close by, gashes, high on the now leafless aspen appear like sacred graffiti inscribed by grateful forest inhabitants.

Standing as living totems to the Solstice the trees bear witness to the timeless arc of Peace and Stillness.

On Dec. 21, the sun stops moving southward, pauses, and then starts moving northward. This pause is called the "solstice," from the Latin words "sol" for "sun" and "sisto" for "stop."

Want to lead a hike? Come to the April 10th meeting. Tell Chris your favorite hike. Pick a Tuesday between 6/21 & 8/30. Lead the hike! Get involved. It's easy and FUN!

JOIN US!!!!

SPRING MEMBERS MEETING
THIS IS OUR SUMMER PLANNING MEETING

APRIL 10, 2016

5:30 PM

SNOW MOUNTAIN RANCH
RAWLEY ROOM – IN THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
UNDER THE CHAPEL



SOME INTERESTING UNUSUAL FACTS ABOUT BEES

1. THEIR STING HAS SOME BENEFITS: A toxin in bee venom called melittin may prevent HIV. Melittin can kill HIV by poking holes into the virus's protective envelope. (Meanwhile, when mellitin hitches a ride on certain nanoparticles, it will just bounce off normal cells and leave them unharmed.)

Bee stings may also ease pain caused by rheumatoid arthritis. Researchers found that molecules in bee venom increase your body's level of glucocorticoid, an anti-inflammatory hormone.

2. THEY WORK HARDER THAN YOU: During chillier seasons, worker bees can live for nine months. But in the summer, they rarely last longer than six weeks—they literally work themselves to death.

3. WHEN THEY CHANGE JOBS, THEY CHANGE THEIR BRAIN CHEMISTRY: Bees are hardwired to do certain jobs. Scout bees, which search for new sources of food, are wired for adventure. Soldier bees, discovered in 2012, work as security guards their whole life. One percent of all middle-aged bees become undertakers—a genetic brain pattern compels them to remove dead bees from the hive. But most amazingly, regular honeybees—which perform multiple jobs in their lifetime—will change their brain chemistry before taking up a new gig.

4. THEIR BRAINS DEFY TIME: When aging bees do jobs usually reserved for younger members, their brain stops aging. In fact, their brain ages in reverse. (Imagine if riding a tricycle didn't just make you feel young—it actually made your brain tick like a younger person's.) Researches hope the discovery can help us slow the onset of dementia.

5. THEY'RE CHANGING MEDICINE: To reinforce their hives, bees use a resin from poplar and evergreen trees called propolis. It's basically beehive glue. Although bees use it as caulk, humans use it to fight off bacteria, viruses, and fungi. Research shows that propolis taken from a beehive may relieve cold sores, canker sores, herpes, sore throat, cavities, and even eczema.

6. THEY CAN RECOGNIZE HUMAN FACES: Honeybees make out faces the same way we do. They take parts—like eyebrows, lips, and ears—and cobble them together to make out the whole face. It's called "configural processing," and it might help computer scientists improve face recognition technology.

7. THEY HAVE PERSONALITIES: Even in beehives, there are workers and shirkers. Researchers found that not all bees are interchangeable drones. Some bees are thrill-seekers. Others are a bit more timid. One study even found that agitated honeybees can be pessimistic, showing that, to some extent, bees might have feelings.

8. THEY GET BUZZED FROM CAFFEINE AND COCAINE: Nature didn't intend caffeine to be trapped inside an orange mocha frappuccino. It's actually a plant defense chemical that shoos harmful insects away and lures pollinators in. Scientists found that nectar laced with caffeine helps bees remember where the flower is, increasing the chances of a return visit.

While caffeine makes bees work better, cocaine turns them into big fat liars. Bees "dance" to communicate—a way of giving fellow bees directions to good food. But high honeybees exaggerate their moves and overemphasize the food's quality. They even exhibit withdrawal symptoms, helping us understand the nuances of addiction.

9. THEY HAVE VIKING-LIKE SUPERVISION: Bees use the sun as a compass. But when it's cloudy, there's a backup—they navigate by polarized light, using special photoreceptors to find the sun's place in the sky. The Vikings may have used a similar system. On sunny days, they navigated with sundials, but on cloudy days, sunstones—chunks of calcite that act like a Polaroid filter—helped them stay on course.

10. THEY CAN SOLVE HAIRY MATHEMATICAL PROBLEMS: Pretend it's the weekend, and it's time to do errands. You have to visit six stores and they're all at six separate locations. What's the shortest distance you can travel while visiting all six? Mathematicians call this "traveling salesman problem," and it can even stump some computers. But for bumblebees, it's a snap. Researchers found that bumblebees fly the shortest route possible between flowers. So far, they're the only animals known to solve the problem.

11. THEY'RE NATURE'S MOST ECONOMICAL BUILDERS: In 36 B.C., Marcus Terentius Varro argued that honeycombs were the most practical structures around. Centuries later, Greek mathematician Pappus solidified the "honeycomb conjecture" by making the same claim. Almost 2000 years later, Thomas Hales wrote a proof showing that, of all the possible structures, honeycombs use the least amount of wax. And not only are honeycombs the most efficient structures in nature—the walls meet at a precise 120-degree angle, a perfect hexagon.

12. THEY CAN HELP US CATCH SERIAL KILLERS: Serial killers behave like bees. They commit their crimes close to home, but far away enough that the neighbors don't get suspicious. Similarly, bees collect pollen near their hive, but far enough that predators can't find the hive. To understand how this "buffer zone" works, scientists studied bee behavior and wrote up a few algorithms. Their finding improved computer models police use to find felons.

13. THEY'RE JOB CREATORS: Americans consume over 285 million pounds of honey each year. On top of that, the U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that honeybees pollinate 80 percent of the country's insect crops—meaning bees pollinate over \$20 billion worth of crops each year.

Looking forward to summer! Nick Schade

As the summer field season approaches we are excited to announce that we have received a Wilderness Stewardship Performance grant which will allow us to pay for three Student Conservation Association interns to assist in Wilderness patrols and visitor education in the Indian Peaks, Never Summer, Byers Peak and Vasquez Peak Wilderness areas. This summer we are also happy to have Andy Borek serve as Lead Wilderness Ranger. Also, Corey Kohen who has worked on our non-motorized trail crew will assist in Wilderness part time. This will be a huge increase in field presence over past years. We will be having the Wilderness team primarily working Thursday through Sunday patrolling popular lakes and trails in Wilderness areas on the Sulphur Ranger District. We are also looking forward to a summer full of trails, campsite rehabilitation, and data collection projects in Wilderness. Please check the Grand County Wilderness Group website at www.gcwg.org for information on opportunities to volunteer on these projects and we appreciate your assistance in hosting Monarch and Junco cabins.

Special Thanks to Chas McConnell at McConnell Printing for his help with printing this newsletter.

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

Preservation

- Patrol shores for fish line filament and recycling
- Work on a National Public Lands day project
- Adopt an Osprey nest
- Monitor a blue bird box

Improvement

- Adopt a registration box
- Join a Daisy Days project and help eradicate noxious weeds
- Pollinator seeding project

Public Understanding

- Cabin Hosting (Junco and Monarch)
- Hike wilderness trails
- Lead a group hike
- Take digital photos to share
- Staff the booth at the Art Affair
- Wear your tee shirt, hat, vest to bring awareness

Protection

- Construct signage
- Update trail bulletin boards