



# COLORADO MOUNTAIN CLUB

## BACKPACKING SECTION



## BACKCOUNTRY CACHE

A Newsletter for Members of CMC Backpacking Section

May 2025

### CHAIR'S CORNER - Louise Campbell-Blair



It was fantastic to see so many of you at the BPX Member Summit! Our amazing Trip Leaders kicked off the season by launching 35 BPX Trips—and even more have been added since! Missed the event? No worries—you can view the full presentation here. These are also available on the BPX webpage along with much more BPX news and info.

[Slides from BPX Member Summit 2025](#)

[Zoom Recording from BPX Member Summit 2025](#) (missing first few minutes)





There's a lot to look forward to this year, all with a focus on helping you enjoy your adventures safely and confidently.

Dialing in your gear? Come on a Gear Shakedown Trip! Thinking about trimming your base weight? Want tastier camp meals? Or just fine-tuning your setup for the season? Join a Gear Shakedown Trip! These easier trips usually feature a “tour of tents,” where you can swap ideas and get useful tips from fellow backpackers.

I’m currently obsessing over my vestibule setup—didn’t expect so many choices, but here we are!

Stay connected with us – we love hearing from you on our socials and at [cmcbpx@gmail.com](mailto:cmcbpx@gmail.com).

## BPX EDUCATIONAL SERIES

This year your BPX Committee is putting together educational events to help members be better informed and prepared for their outdoor adventures. Here are the ones scheduled so far. Please check them out and register!

Event	Date/Time	Description
<a href="#">Introduction to Backpacking</a>	Thu, May 29; 06:30-08:00 PM via Zoom	Co-hosted by BPX and the Denver Group’s Backpacking School, this presentation will offer a practical overview of key risks and considerations for Colorado’s backcountry, essential gear recommendations, and how to make the most of CMC resources to build your backpacking skills and experience.
<a href="#">Eco-Friendly, Lightweight Backpacking</a>	Thu, Jun 5; 06:30-08:00 PM via Zoom	Karl Ford is one of a very select group who has completed all 3 legs of the Triple Crown of backpacking (AT, PCT, and CDT). He is also a WTS Master Instructor. Join Karl to learn how we can backpack responsibly, enjoy it more, and give back to the trail.
<a href="#">Session 1: Learn how to navigate with GAIA GPS for the Hiking Participant</a>	Thu, Jul 10; 06:00-08:30 PM at CMC Basecamp	Getting lost is very uncomfortable at the least, and terrifying at the worst. The good news is that this can be avoided. Learn how to navigate with GAIA GPS and be safe in the backcountry.
<a href="#">Session 2: Learn how to navigate with GAIA GPS for Trip Leaders</a>	Thu, Jul 17; 06:00-08:30 PM at CMC Basecamp	

## BPX TRIP REPORTS

Gear Shakedown Trip - Colorado Trail Section 3 and Little Scraggy Trail

Trip Leader Cheryl Harmel - Denver Group

All 5 experienced BPX members had wonderful weather for an early season gear shakedown. This was originally scheduled for the Wigwam trail, but probable dangerous stream crossings caused a change to the drier CO Trail Segment 3. We parked at the Little Scraggy trailhead and hiked ~3 miles on the joint CO Trail and Little Scraggy Loop trail. We stopped along the way to enjoy some early wildflowers, impressive Pikes Peak Granite rock formations, and views of snow-covered peaks. After everyone set up their camp with no problems and we ate lunch, we hiked further on the CO and Little Scraggy Trails. We read and enjoyed nature the rest of the afternoon at camp. Morrison Creek had a gentle stream of water, though we were careful to minimize “extra minerals.” The weather continued to be wonderful, and we had a perfect first trip. I wish every trip was so easy!



## BPX TIP OF THE MONTH

### Biodegradable Soap Versus the Backcountry

Many of us have the misconception that because a soap says it's biodegradable, it must be OK to use in the backcountry. But all soaps, including biodegradable ones, contain chemicals and can have an immediate impact on fresh water, including increased nitrogen levels that can be harmful to aquatic life. Biodegradable just means it will eventually break down—maybe in 6 months, maybe in years. To biodegrade requires soil, so it will never break down in a river or lake.

If you do use soap, make sure it is biodegradable and phosphate-free, like [Campsuds](#), [SeaToSummit Wilderness Wash](#), or [Dr. Bronner's Castille Soap](#). Also remember that most biodegradable soaps are highly concentrated--it only takes a few drops. They often have a fragrance that attracts bears, so make sure you store them in your bear bag away from Yogi and Boo-Boo.

When using soap for any type of cleaning, be at least at least 200 feet away from water sources. Then dispose of your soapy wash and rinse water properly by digging a cathole 6 to 8 inches deep and pouring your wastewater into it. This way bacteria in the soil can biodegrade the soap, and it will also hide the scent from wildlife.

There are alternatives to biodegradable soap, like a washcloth and hot water, alcohol-based hand sanitizers, and hand and body wipes like [Wet Ones](#), [SeaToSummit Wilderness Wipes](#), [Cold Shower Face and Body Wipes](#), and [Pact Wipes](#) that you pack out and dispose of at home.

*Note: Alcohol-based sanitizers are not effective against the category of viruses that include Norovirus, as many hikers on the Appalachian Trail found out last year—only washing your hands with soap and water.*

Lotions, sunscreen, insect repellent, and body oils can contaminate lakes and streams too, so consider this before jumping in.

**Remember, if you wouldn't like to drink it yourself, don't put it in a water source!**

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Since it's rattlesnake season, here's another good article: [Snake Safety on Colorado Trails](#) ☐: [Rattlesnake Season Guide](#)

# TREAD LIGHTLY

## Sustainability, Recycling, Leave No Trace

Looking to make your backpacking trips more sustainable? Check out these simple conservation tips from CMC's Conservation Director, Brian Beregler. Then, take it a step further by joining Karl Ford's Zoom presentation, [Eco-friendly, Lightweight Backpacking](#), on June 5. Double the impact—on your experience, not the environment!



## BPX TRIPS

Trips will typically open up 30 days prior to their start date (trips requiring camping or permit fees may open up sooner), and there is no limit on the number of BPX trips you can go on! However, you must be a member of the BPX Section.

### Upcoming Trips With Openings\*

Dates / Registration Date	Difficulty	Trip
May 28-29 Wed-Thu	Easy Gear Shakedown	<a href="#">Fraser Meadows from Horseshoe TH</a>
Jun 10-12 Tue-Thu	Easy	<a href="#">Goose Creek Trail to Shafthouse From Goose Creek TH</a>
Jun 27-28 Fri-Sat / May 23	Moderate	<a href="#">Rich, Rough, and Tumbling Creeks from Rich Creek TH</a>

### Upcoming Trips With 0-1 on Waitlist\*

Dates / Registration Date	Difficulty	Trip
May 31-Jun 1 Sat-Sun	Easy Gear Shakedown	<a href="#">Morrison Creek from Little Scraggy TH Gear Check</a>
Jun 2-5 Mon-Thu	Difficult	<a href="#">Cathedral Lake from Cathedral Lake TH</a>
Jun 6-8 Fri-Sun	Challenging	<a href="#">Lost Park from Rolling Creek TH</a>
Jun 7-9 Sat-Mon	Difficult	<a href="#">Bison and McCurdy Peaks from Lost Park TH</a>

**Continue to check the CMC Website since Leaders add trips throughout the season.**

You can check your trip status by hovering over your name at the top of the main CMC Home Page and selecting the *My Activities* option from the dropdown. This displays a page with the activities you are registered for along with your status--Registered or Waitlist with your waitlist position. If you are on the waitlist, keep checking since there are often cancellations. You will also receive an email from the CMC if a spot opens up.

Whether you are on a waitlist or a roster, if you decide to NOT go on a trip, please **CANCEL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**. It may not seem necessary if you are on a waitlist, but many trips have a relatively high turnover shortly before the trip, so please cancel to open up a spot for the next person.

[Mountain Side Gear Rental](#) in Golden rents backpacking gear with a 10% discount for CMC Members.

## SCHOOLS

DENVER	
DAY HIKER SCHOOL	More info <a href="#">here</a>
INTRO TO HIKING SAFETY	<a href="#">May 21</a>
CPR/AED FOR OUTDOOR ENTHUSIASTS	<a href="#">Jun 17</a>
BACKCOUNTRY INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SCHOOL	<a href="#">Sep 13</a>

PIKES PEAK	
LAND NAVIGATION	Starts <a href="#">Jun 2</a> <a href="#">Oct 6</a>
INTRO TO BACKPACKING	Starts <a href="#">Jun 9</a> <a href="#">Aug 11</a>
WTS - WILDERNESS FUNDAMENTALS	Starts <a href="#">Sep 15</a>

NORTHERN COLORADO	
BACKCOUNTRY INCIDENT MANAGMENT SCHOOL	<a href="#">Jun 7</a>

STATE	
WILDERNESS FIRST AID/FIRST RESPONDER	Multiple Offerings - Check CMC Website <a href="#">here</a>
TRIP LEADER SCHOOL	More Info <a href="#">here</a>
TRIP LEADER SCHOOL SCENARIOS	<a href="#">Boulder</a> <a href="#">Denver</a> <a href="#">Northern Colorado</a> <a href="#">Pikes Peak</a> <a href="#">Western Slope</a>

**Continue to check the CMC Website for additional courses.**

## BPX MEMBER INFO

**BPX MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL:** When renewing your CMC Membership, remember to choose the Backpacking Section for an additional \$20 on the SELECT YOUR SECTIONS page. You can also join/renew your BPX membership any time by calling the CMC Office at (303) 279-3080.

**COLORADO ROAD INFORMATION:** [here](#)

**FIRE INFO:** [National Interagency Fire Center News](#) [Colorado Fire Restrictions](#) [Wildfire Risk Management Checklist](#)

It's Mud Season, so remember to check the website or land manager for upcoming trips to make sure the trail is open.

***CMC Backpacking Section Supports Leave No Trace***

[View BPX Calendar](#)



### The Colorado Mountain Club

15605 W. 32nd Ave., Golden, CO 80401  
303.279.3080 ext.#3

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