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"BACKCOUNTRY CACHE"

A Newsletter for Members of CMC Backpacking Section

January 2020

RAINBOW LAKE ONE OF OVER 40 BPX TRIPS CLAIMED BY LEADERS ON JANUARY 21ST



Photo credit: Bob Watkins

More than thirty BPX Leaders claimed more than 40 backpacking trips to be led during the months of May through October. Leaders will now "own" these trips and select actual dates, campsites, number of participants planned and additional pertinent details by February 18th.

Then, on March 18th BPX will hold its Backpacking Season KickOff at the American Mountaineering Center. On-line Registration opens February 1st. Come out to meet BPX Leaders, fellow backpackers and vie for winning tickets to:

One Free CMC Backpacking School Tuition

Three \$75 Gift Certificates to Golden and Denver Gear Stores

Four Gift Certificates for BPX Gear Checks in May and June

BPX GEAR CHECKS

How many months has it been since you've seen your tent or your filtration device?

Do you have some older gear that needs replacement?

Are you new to backpacking and want to see what gear others use?

Register March 1st for a **BPX Gear Check** to be held at Cherry Creek State Park midweek May 26th and on the weekend May 29th. Each Gear Check is scheduled late afternoon through the next morning. We'll make it real - or as real as it can be at a busy state park. At least you'll get a chance to remember why you said you needed a new air mattress or a chance to try out something besides freeze dried, out-of-the-bag food.

Twelve campsites have been reserved for May 26th with twenty-four sites reserved for May 29th.

Gear Checks are also planned for June 23rd and June 26th at a Jeffco Open Space Park or another state park to be determined.

Not certain of the advantage of a Gear Check? Read Daniel Schweissing's account of his first Gear Check.

On the Trail Again:

How the Backpack Gear Check Helped Me Get There

Dan Schweissing

Backpacking wasn't part of my plan when I joined the CMC. As a teenager, I had done several lengthy camping trips on my road bike as well as a handful of overnight backpacking trips. But that was in my past. Or, so I thought.

One day while browsing through the CMC trip calendar, I saw John and Linda's Backpack Gear Check at Reynolds Park. I was mainly drawn by the opportunity to go on an early season camping trip. But also encouraged that the trip objective was, in part, to help CMC members like myself who had not backpacked in a while and wanted to get back into it.

Why not? I thought. It's only a half-mile hike. The worst that could happen is that I'd find out I really don't ever want to do this again.

After digging my thirty-year-old camping gear out of storage, I quickly figured out that I'd need to rent a few items for the trip. But, surprisingly, most of what I had in storage would work. At least well enough for this trip.

As advertised, the overnight gear check helped me figure out what still worked, what didn't, and—in conversation with more experienced backpackers—what my options were for upgrading my equipment.

After spending most of the summer researching new gear, shopping for bargains and discounts, slowly making upgrades, ruthless dispensing with unnecessary items, and meticulously tracking my pack weight on an Excel spreadsheet, my pack dropped ten pounds from the initial 42-pound load I carried to Reynolds Park in May.

In early September, I completed a second overnight gear check to Reynolds Park. And after making a few more tweaks to my gear, a former college classmate and I set out on a 9-mile 1400' overnight trip to enjoy the fall colors in the Lost Creek Wilderness. Mission accomplished!

While—budget permitting—I still anticipate a few more gear upgrades, I'm mainly just looking forward to getting back out into the Lost Creek Wilderness under the power of my own legs, spending a couple of nights under the stars, and not having to worry about whether or not my equipment can make the grade.

A native-Coloradan, Daniel Schweissing aka Colorado Jones, is a member of CMC since November 2018 who regularly leads hikes and snowshoe trips for the Rocky Mountain Over the Hill Section of CMC Denver Group.

Want your great backpacking photo featured? Send it to CMCBPXRNewsletter@gmail.com with your name, location and date. We will feature it in our CMC Backpacking Newsletter.

CMC connects Coloradans with more than 3,000 trips, hikes and activities annually. Members also receive huge deals on outdoor gear, lodging, events and more.

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