



COLORADO MOUNTAIN CLUB

BACKPACKING SECTION



BACKCOUNTRY CACHE

A Newsletter for Members of CMC Backpacking Section (BPX)

July 2026

CHAIR'S CORNER - Louise Campbell-Blair



Here's an historical BPX fact for you ... this month marks the 6th anniversary of the first BPX Trip. The BPX Section was launched in 2020 by **Linda Lawson** and the late John Walters. That year they led the first BPX trip July 7-11 to Skinny Fish, McGinnis, and Wall Lakes in the Flattop Wilderness Area. It was during the first year of Covid so they had to use special precautions for packing gear and people in carpools, food sharing, etc. You can read all about how the BPX Section got its start in this [article](#).

This month BPX Members are certainly getting around. We're enjoying trips to 8 different Wilderness Areas: Zirkle and Never Summer with **John Gode**, 2 trips to Holy Cross with **Eric Butler** and **Michael Rees**, Comanche Peak with **Craig Townsend**, Byers Peak with **Candace Winkle**, Lost Creek with **George Vandyke**, Buffalo Peak with **Terry Ploski**, and Rawah Wilderness with **myself**. Big thanks to all these trip leaders and their co-leaders for leading these adventures.

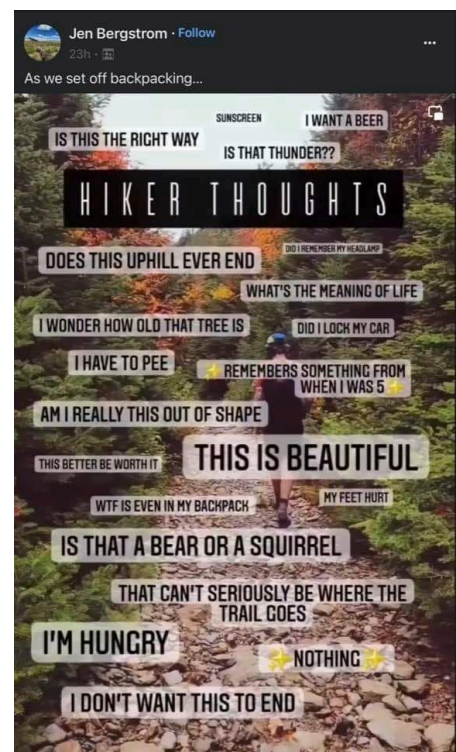
Our thoughts are with all of those dealing with the devastating wildfires across Colorado. Please be safe, park like a First Responder (back in), and ensure you and your group read the ['Wildfire Risk Management Checklist'](#).

Stay connected with us – we love hearing from you on our socials and at cmcbpx@gmail.com.

JOIN THE BPX COMMITTEE!

BPX is looking for that special member who not only loves backpacking but gets a kick out of volunteering. We are interviewing for Committee Chair, Trip Leader Coordinator and Events/Social Media Coordinator. The BPX Committee meets monthly via Zoom and holds 3-4 in person events each year. Volunteer hours average less than 8 hours a month. The BPX section is in its 6th season delivering high quality programming, and now the Committee needs **“YOU”** to keep it going and growing. Please contact Louise Campbell-Blair, BPX Committee Chair, to chat about these opportunities at lcampbellblair@hotmail.com.

Join us and be part of a great team!



BPX TRIP REPORTS

Abyss Lake Trail - Mount Evans Wilderness

Trip Leader R.A. Burrell - Denver Group

Five backpackers adventured into the solitude of the Mount Evans Wilderness, leaving behind the comforts of home. Little did they know they would awaken the next morning to the smell of freshly brewed, French pressed coffee, courtesy of trip leader R.A. The weather was cool and rainless--perfect for a “parade of tents”. We highly recommend this “parade” for BPX backpacks. It’s a great way to pick up tips and ideas from fellow backpackers. There were a few hiccups—a dirty water bag that snaked its way into a hidden backpack pocket, a tent that twisted itself into conceptions, a river crossing that was at least ankle deep, and moose refusing to be sighted until just off the road on our drive home. Just a relaxing, chill, phone-free backpack with a fun group of people!



Trip Leader Steve Norman - Denver Group

In late June 6 BPX Members met at the Hessie Trailhead and ventured in just over 6 miles and 2400 vertical feet to Betty Lake. We even had our very own Betty along on the trip! While we had some rain on the way up, the weather cleared while setting up our camp at tree line, and we then enjoyed an afternoon hike up to Bob Lake with up-close views of Skyscraper Glacier. Some rain returned (as luck would have it) just as our dinners were ready to eat, but we huddled under a handy tarp as the storm passed. Evening brought moonlight and a lightning show as the storm settled into the Front Range. The next day we enjoyed a leisurely breakfast, hiked out, visited a much-appreciated lemonade stand at the trailhead and ate a hearty lunch at Ned General in Nederland. All agreed it was a great trip!



Rich, Rough, and Tumbling Creeks - Buffalo Peaks Wilderness

Trip Leaders Sharon and Bob Dawson - Denver Group

Simple Math: 10 adventurous CMC members + 12 miles of beautiful mountain solitude = 1 fantastic backpack trip. Special attractions: 3 moose

After meeting up and driving to the Rich Creek trailhead, we headed out in a counter clock wise direction on the loop. Less than an hour from the start, in a particularly narrow section of the trail, we encountered a cow moose and her calf. We had no way around them with a steep hill to one side and a stream to the other side. She took a few steps towards us and we backed up and away. They exited across the stream and we breathed a sigh of relief. We had the campsite overlooking the huge meadow to ourselves. We talked, laughed and enjoyed a relatively mosquito free evening. The next day on our way out, what did our eyes spy but another moose, this time much further away. Nothing more to say but another fantastic CMC adventure.



Crags Campground, State Forest State Park

Trip Leader Louise Campbell-Blair - Denver Group

Seven BPX members enjoyed a 2-night camping trip at the Crags Campground in State Forest State Park. The campground offers primitive campsites, along with a potable water pump and exceptionally clean vault toilets. Each day featured outstanding hikes right from camp. On the first day, we explored American Lake and Snow Lake, followed by a hike to Lake Agnes on the second. Although temperatures remained surprisingly hot—even at 10,000 feet—we were grateful for clear, smoke-free skies, which made for spectacular mountain views. A friendly park ranger recommended a local dive bar where we cheered on England as they defeated Norway. Back at camp, the evenings were spent enjoying happy hour, sharing stories, and gathering around the fire ring—without a fire, of course, due to the fire ban.



DENVER WILDERNESS TREKKING SCHOOL

Starts Sept 8

Hiking may not be as easy as it looks! Do you know all you need for staying found, for braving Colorado's rapidly changing weather, for handling an emergency? Wilderness Trekking School (WTS) is for all – whether you want to bag a few 14ers – OR – just want to enjoy the scenery. WTS is a comprehensive course on day hiking in the mountains, with no prerequisites. If you're new to hiking, WTS provides the opportunity to learn how to travel safely and confidently in the backcountry. If you're an experienced hiker, WTS gives you a chance to review and enhance your skills, and possibly to fill in some gaps. It is also a great introduction to the Colorado Mountain Club and a place to meet new friends. Student ages range from 18 to 80, with about half under 40. WTS is a prerequisite for Backpacking School, Alpine Scrambling Course, and Technical Climbing Schools. Tuition is \$170 until August 31, \$190 after. Registration opens **Tuesday July 7**.

For more information, including a complete schedule of lectures and field trips and enrollment instructions, visit our web site at [Wilderness Trekking School](http://WildernessTrekkingSchool.org), or search “wts denver” on CMC.org. Information is also available by calling the CMC office at 303-279-3080.

BPX TRIPS

Upcoming Trips With Openings*

Dates / Registration Date	Difficulty	Trip
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Jul 26-27 Sun-Mon	Moderate	Lake Constantine from Fall Creek TH
Aug 15-16 Sat-Sun	Moderate	Colorado Trail Segment 9 - Tennessee Pass TH to Timberline Lake TH
Aug 18-20 Tue-Thu	Moderate	Eccles Pass from Meadow Creek TH
Aug 22-26 Sat-Wed	Challenging	Granite Canyon TH to Jenny Lake (Grand Teton National Park)
Aug 25-27 Tue-Thu	Moderate	Rich, Rough, and Tumbling Creeks from Rich Creek TH
Aug 26-28 Wed-Fri	Easy	Burning Bear Campground
Aug 29-30 Sat-Sun	Moderate	Colorado Trail Segment 10 from Timberline Lake TH

Upcoming Trips With 0-1 On Waitlist*

Dates / Registration Date	Difficulty	Trip
Jul 24-26 Fri-Sun	Difficult	Hunky Dory and Harvey Lakes from Half Moon TH to Cross Creek TH
Jul 30-Aug 1 Thu-Sat	Moderate	Lake Evelyn from Lake Evelyn TH (Byers Peak Wilderness)
Aug 11-13 Tue-Thu	Moderate	Walter's Hut from Vail Pass TH
Aug 17-20 Mon-Thu	Challenging	Double Bypass Loop from Long Lake TH

*As Of July 19

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

Whether you are on a waitlist or a roster, if you decide to NOT go, **CANCEL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE** 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.

DENVER	
DAY HIKER SCHOOL	More info here
WILDERNESS TREKKING SCHOOL (WTS)	More info here
CPR/AED FOR OUTDOOR ENTHUSIASTS	Jul 27
BACKCOUNTRY INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SCHOOL	Aug 8 Sep 12

PIKES PEAK	
INTRO TO BACKPACKING	Starts Aug 12
WILDERNESS FUNDAMENTALS	Starts Sep 14
LAND NAVIGATION	Starts Sep 28

NORTHERN COLORADO	
BACKCOUNTRY INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SCHOOL	Jul 25

BOULDER	
RISK AND INCIDENT MANAGEMENT	Aug 22
BACKCOUNTRY INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SCHOOL	Aug 29

STATE	
WILDERNESS FIRST AID/FIRST RESPONDER	Multiple Offerings - Check CMC Website here
TRIP LEADER SCHOOL	More Info here
TRIP LEADER SCHOOL SCENARIOS	Boulder Denver Pikes Peak Western Slope

Continue to check the CMC Website for additional courses.

CMC Backpacking Section Supports Leave No Trace

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[View BPX Calendar](#)



The Colorado Mountain Club

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