



COLORADO MOUNTAIN CLUB

BACKPACKING SECTION



BACKCOUNTRY CACHE

A Newsletter for Members of CMC Backpacking Section

October 2025

CHAIR'S CORNER - Louise Campbell-Blair



What did BPX Members get up to on this month's epic camping adventure in Utah? All will be revealed (well, maybe not *all*...) at our **End of Season Party on October 25!** We can't wait to swap stories, share a few laughs, and celebrate another amazing year of adventures with you.

This is your chance to reconnect, reflect, and help shape what's ahead. Got a dream destination in mind? Come chat with your favorite Trip Leaders—we're already thinking about where the trails should take us next year, and your ideas are a big part of the journey.

As the leaves turn and the air gets crisp, it's the perfect time to cozy up with friends, relive the season's best moments, and start dreaming about future trails and travels. Whether you joined one trip or ten, you're part of what makes BPX such a vibrant, welcoming community.

We'll also be presenting the BPX Founders Award ([nomination form here](#)) to one outstanding Leader or Member, so don't forget to get your nomination in early!

Mark your calendar. You won't want to miss it!

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

BPX END of SEASON PARTY - October 25, 5-8:30pm



Join us this Saturday for a fun-filled evening with your fellow BPX Members and Trip Leaders! We'll feature your photos and videos on the big screen—so we can all relive the amazing places you've been and the adventures you've had. Don't miss this chance to reconnect, reflect, and celebrate another unforgettable year on the trails! This is both a Zoom and in-person event at the CMC Basecamp.

Don't delay--registration closes Thursday at 5pm!

Register

Share Your 2025 Adventures!

We're building a photo archive from this year's trips, and we'd love to include yours! Selected photos will appear in a slide show at this BPX event. Whether you're a leader or trip participant, please upload your favorite shots [here](#) (Google folder, requires Google account). Trail views, campsite moments, goofy group selfies—we want it all.

BPX TRIP REPORTS

Escalante Camping Trip

Trip Leaders Louise Campbell-Blair and Wayne Howell - Denver Group

Fabulous BPX camping adventure in Utah last week. We hiked off trail across desert and slick rock to the stunning 'Cosmic Ashtray' where Brad Cotton expertly assisted those who wanted to rappel into the unknown. Next we spent a day hiking through the canyons and hoodoos at gorgeous Bryce Canyon. On our final day we hiked in and out of the Escalante River exploring the ancient petroglyphs, granaries and natural bridges. The icing on the cake was the newly renovated showers at Escalante Petrified Forest State Park. I'm not exaggerating when I say it was like being a 5 star resort!



Wigwam Park - Lost Creek Wilderness

Trip Leader Danielle Piscatelli - Denver Group

This trip into the Lost Creek Wilderness via the Wigwam Trail was meant as a quick overnight. For me, one last trip into the backcountry before the active fall and hectic holiday season commenced. There were six of us, in total. Five of whom met at the Twin Forks Park n' Ride to drive together to the trailhead. And one person who would meet us at the trailhead. This particular trail was new to me. Everything I had read said it was easy to follow, plenty of camping and not difficult. Seemed perfect for a weekday getaway! In every way, but one, the trip was exactly that. Little did we know the drive to the trailhead would be the most difficult part of our overnight.

For the five of us who carpooled, google maps took us through Bailey and onto Wellington Lake Road for most of the way. Note to the reader – DO NOT GO THIS WAY! That is, unless you like off-roading. A twisty, turny, roller-coaster, 4WD drive type of a road. A few head bumps on the top of the car. Some shoulder bumping against the windows and major clutching of the 'oh shit' handles were our drive. It was unexpected and led each of us to wonder if all the descriptions of this trail were deceiving. Our single positive was the bison and wild turkeys we saw along the way.

After reaching the trailhead and getting our equilibrium back we met up with our sixth hiker and on our way. Given the short distance and the weekday travel, a sunrise start was completely unnecessary; therefore, we began hiking mid-morning. Remnants of a fire exposed the boulder like cliffs on our left which were stunningly spectacular. Some of the aspens had lost their leaves but many still had vibrant colors creating, although overcast, a perfect fall day. The temps were warm, almost 70. In many ways it was one of those days where you LOVE being outside.

Our decision was to hike until the beaver ponds (and damns), then find a place to camp for the night. The trail is beautiful. Simple, easy to hike, follows the creek the entire way, with several makeshift crossings. The sad part for me is the degradation of the Wilderness area. It is a Leave No Trace hotspot if I ever saw one. Not one section of river front isn't dotted with some former fire pit, along with the living room like logs surrounding it. Many of these pits looked as if they were used recently as well, despite this past seasons fire ban.

We walked approximately four miles then began looking for a campsite. The one listed on the CMC webpage with the backpacking group was unappealing to everyone so after breaking for a long lunch there, we headed back down the trail to a previous site we noticed. After finding a suitable spot, setting up camp, we spent the remainder of the afternoon swapping hiking stories. Between the six of us we have hiked at least 15 different long trails in the country. Our stories continued through dinner and into the evening the darkness. I'm not sure I was the only one who went to bed contemplating which long trail I would pursue next.

An early morning wake up, without much delay, we set off back to the cars before 8:30am. With a relatively fast hiking group we were back to the trailhead by 10am. The morning was cooler with some drizzle. Though it did almost appear that the aspens turned even more overnight. Some were orange, not just yellow. Again, beautiful fall colors. We had hoped we would spot a moose. Remnants of the animals was all around, not to mention where we camped was prime habitat. Alas, none graced us with their presence. Our ride home was so much more pleasant after we realized we could drive back a different way and not encounter the same difficult road we drove in on and we were back at the park n' ride by noon. For me the trip was exactly what I wanted, a quick overnight escape to enjoy the fall colors. Wigwam Trail is perfect for that. The drive is a bit long from Denver but there are plenty of camping spots, easy hike in, relaxing by the water. I highly suggest it!





BPX TIP OF THE MONTH/TREAD LIGHTLY

Just Say “NO” to Recreational Carins

True navigational carins are invaluable for finding your way in treacherous terrain. But more and more people are building them as trail art, to leave their mark, or to satisfy their need to stack stuff. Here's some reasons why these are not good.

- You could be messing up actual navigation. Carins are still critical navigation markers, guiding hikers across terrain where a marked path is faint or doesn't exist, like boulder fields or alpine routes. When you build a random stack, you could be creating false navigational clues, potentially causing someone to get off route and maybe lost, especially in low visibility conditions.
- Building carins is a violation of Leave No Trace Principle #2: Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces. The rocks you remove are homes for small animals like insects and snakes. They are also important for preventing erosion and retaining moisture. This is especially true in arid environments with cryptogamic soil crusts. The impact can be even more damaging when the carins are built off trail and create “social trails”.
- Recreational carins can be like graffiti, ruining the experience of untouched, natural landscapes.

Instead of building carins or adding to them, just take pictures and truly leave no trace.

Reference: Jackson, Katie. "PSA: This Seemingly Innocent Hiker Pastime Is Harming Your Favorite Trails". The Trek, 16 Jul. 2025, <https://thetrek.co/psa-this-seemingly-innocent-hiker-pastime-is-harming-your-favorite-trails/>

BPX TRIPS

There currently are no BPX trips scheduled, but watch the CMC calendar for winter outings. And stay tuned for the 2026 BPX Member Summit Event and Trip Catalog Release next spring!

SCHOOLS

DENVER

DAY HIKER SCHOOL

More info [here](#)

CPR/AED

[Oct 27](#)

WINTER CAMPING SCHOOL

Starts [Feb 10](#)

INTRO TO HIKING SAFETY

[Mar 25](#)

PIKES PEAK

AIARE 1

Starts [Jan 5](#)

AVALANCHE TERRAIN AVOIDANCE

Starts [Jan 14](#)

WILDERNESS FUNDAMENTALS

Starts [Feb 23](#)

AIARE AVALANCHE RESCUE

[Mar 8](#)

WINTER WILDERNESS SURVIVAL

Starts [Mar 9](#)

NORTHERN COLORADO

AVALANCHE TERRAIN AVOIDANCE

[Dec 10](#)

WESTERN SLOPE

AVALANCHE TERRAIN AVOIDANCE

[Jan 11](#)

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

[View BPX Calendar](#)



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