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# BACKCOUNTRY CACHE

A Newsletter for Members of CMC Backpacking Section

May 2022

## WILDFIRE RISK MANAGEMENT - John Walters

Wildfires are becoming a greater risk to all who venture into the wilderness:

- 20 of the top 20 largest Colorado wildfires have occurred since 2001
- 4 of the top 5 largest Colorado wildfires have occurred since 2018

Wildfires are also getting more widespread:

- In the 1980s, Colorado had 3 wildfires
- In the 2000s, Colorado had 25 wildfires
- In 2020, alone, Colorado had 14 wildfires

CMC trip leaders should plan for wildfire risk management. Here are some thoughts:

1. Wildfires do not mean forest fires. The 2021 Marshall grass fire nearly destroyed Superior and Louisville. From your trailhead, grass fires can block your escape path. Know your alternatives.
2. Wildfires follow the wind. Know the forecast winds for the duration of your trip. Winds can change 180 degrees, even during a day hike.
3. Know about wildfires and wind flows from other Western states. Smoke from neighboring states carries no immediate risk.
4. Use a wider-coverage map to learn the distances and directions to trails and roads nearest your planned trip, and know where they go.
5. Plan alternative escape routes from your trail.
6. Carry a satellite communicator. Just knowing your coordinates, rescuers will know better than you if you need immediate helicopter evacuation.
7. Wear bright colors for visual sighting by SAR.
8. If overrun by a wildfire, lie face-down in a low spot. A creek may be best.

Let's go have fun in the mountains. Just go prepared.

# UPCOMING BPX TRIPS

Trip registration is initially restricted to 3 BPX Backpacking and/or Car Camping trips, whether you are on 3 separate trip rosters, 3 standby lists, or a combination thereof. However, BPX members can now sign up for any June trips, regardless of how many BPX trips they have already registered for.

E=Easy M=Moderate D=Difficult

## May-June Trips With Openings\*

May 24-25 Tue-Wed E [Mueller State Park Backpack](#)  
Jun 2-5 Thu-Sun D [Lost Creek Loop, Lost Creek Wilderness](#)  
Jun 6-7 Mon-Tue E [White Ranch, JeffCo Open Space](#)  
Jun 26-28 Sun-Tue D [Cherry Lake, mt owen 13,340 pt 13,122 cotton king 13,490](#)

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## June Trips With 0-1 on Standby List\*

May 27-28 Fri-Sat E [GEAR SHAKEDOWN, Near Nederland, Arapaho & Roosevelt National Forest](#)  
Jun 14-16 Tue-Thu M [Colorado Trail Seg 5,4, Pike NF](#)  
Jun 17-18 Fri-Sat E [GEAR SHAKEDOWN, Mayflower and Mohawk Lakes, White River NF](#)  
Jun 18-20 Sat-Mon D [Goose Creek McCurdy Park, Lost Creek Wilderness](#)

\*As Of May 20

Continue to check CMC trip signup for additional trips. For just BPX trips, select Backpacking from the Section dropdown and then click the Search button.

[Mountain Side Gear Rental](#) in Golden rents backpacking gear with a 25% discount for CMC Members.

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# SCHOOLS/EVENTS

## DENVER

BACKPACKING SCHOOL Starts [Jun 7](#)

DAY HIKER SCHOOL Virtual Alternative to WTS. More info [here](#)

CPR/AED [May 25](#) [Jun 15](#)

BACKCOUNTRY INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SCHOOL [Jun 4](#) [Jun 18](#) [Jul 16](#) [Aug 20](#)

## PIKES PEAK (PPG)

BMS - WILDERNESS FUNDAMENTALS Starts [Jun 6](#) [Sept 12](#)

BMS - INTRO TO BACKPACKING Starts [Jul 6](#) [Aug 15](#)

BMS - LAND NAVIGATION B Starts [Oct 5](#)

WILDERNESS FIRST AID with CPR/AED Starts [Oct 13](#)

GPS BASICS CLASS [Oct 24](#)

TRIP LEADER SCHOOL More info [here](#)

## STATE

HYBRID WILDERNESS FIRST AID Multiple Offerings - Check CMC Calendar [here](#)

NEW WEBSITE TRIP LEADER TRAINING [May 31](#)

2-DAY WILDERNESS FIRST AID [Jun 11](#) [Jul 9](#) [Aug 27](#)

HYBRID WILDERNESS FIRST RESPONDER Starts [Aug 2](#)

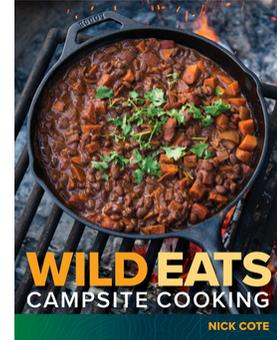
TCS NAVIGATION Virtual Courses: [Nav1/Nav2 Info \(every month\)](#), [Nav1](#), [Nav2](#)

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## WILD EATS COOKBOOK

Whether it's car camping for a weekend or backpacking off the grid, outdoor adventuring makes you hungry. With a focus on delicious, satisfying meals that won't take hours to make, Wild Eats satisfies your cravings, exploring the joys of culinary creativity at camp, for the solo camper or a hungry crowd.

Purchase your copy for your next adventure [here!](#)



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## BPX TRIP REPORTS

### May 7-8 Backpack Trip to Great Sand Dunes National Park

#### Trip Leader Dean Waits - Pikes Peak Group

Had an interesting adventure backpacking into the Great Sand Dunes N.P. and camping in the dunes. Setting up tents in 40 mph winds, hiking over and sliding down the big dunes. Beautiful views of the night skies. Also visited the incredible Zapata Falls.



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Please share your BPX Adventures, Trip Reports, and Photos with the rest of us, your backpacking community. You can add them directly to FB and Instagram or send them to [maggie.burns1@gmail.com](mailto:maggie.burns1@gmail.com), and she will post them for you on FB. And send them to [cmcbpxnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:cmcbpxnewsletter@gmail.com) to publish in the BPX Newsletter.

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# Q&A With Backpackers Bob & Bobbi

Dear Backpackers Bob & Bobbi,

I hear a lot about "light weight" and "ultra-light weight" backpacking. So what's the difference, and is one better than the other? I'm getting my gear together now to hit the trail, so I would appreciate any advice on "lessening the load".

Sincerely,  
Wally Weightbear

*Dear Wally,*

*Great question! You know when Bob and I first started backpacking, we subscribed to the "more is better" philosophy. We wanted to travel in the backcountry but do so comfortably. But, over time we've moved to lower weight, allowing us to travel further and have longer days (and happier backs and feet).*

*Our buddy Bob Dawson, a really experienced BPX Pack Leader, gave a presentation on this topic last year at the May Gear Check. Some of my recommendations are directly from his super presentation.*

Base Weight – weight of your pack, shelter, and sleeping system

Ultralight – base weight <= 10 pounds

Light Weight – base weight <= 20 pounds

*Weigh everything, starting with your empty pack. When deciding which items to include or exclude, the decision is basically weight vs comfort.*

*When looking for how to lighten the load, consider Weight Price Function Durability*

***BE AWARE:** the lighter the weight, the higher the price. How much do you want to spend to reduce the weight of specific items? As an example, for years I used an ALL-CLEAR water purification system requiring a UV charged lid and 2 water bottles. Very effective, very fast, BUT heavy – 15.2 oz. Then, I discovered Life Straw, an inexpensive personal water filtration device weighing about 2 oz. Presto--weight savings of 13.2 oz for not much bucks!*

*When I travel with my gal/pals, some of their heavy pack weight is due to clothing and cosmetics. You really don't need to have clean clothes every single day. Many manufacturers now offer fabrics that are light weight, easy to rinse out and dry, and a "stink away" factor. Cosmetics – think sunscreen – that should be gal's major cosmetic.*

*Wally, I hope this information gets you started weighing your gear and making decisions about how to lighten your load. There are some really good ultralight choices for your base weight, but that depends on how much you are willing to spend within a given time frame. Assessing your gear's weight and focusing on items giving the "biggest bang for the buck" will allow you to prioritize lighter weight gear purchases.*

*Here are some of Bob and my favorite places to shop for lightweight and ultralight gear:*

- [ULA Equipment](#)
- [Zpacks](#)
- [Gossamer Gear](#)
- [Garage Grown Gear](#) (Bob's favorite)
- [Six Moon Designs](#)
- [Hyperlite Mountain Gear](#)
- [Katabatic Gear](#) (Quilts)
- [Enlightened Equipment](#) (Quilts and Clothing)

## BPX MEMBER INFO

**BPX FACEBOOK:** [BPX FB](#) Send Photos and Trips Reports to post on BPX Facebook Page to: [maggie.burns1@gmail.com](mailto:maggie.burns1@gmail.com)

**BPX INSTAGRAM:** [@co\\_backpacking\\_bpx](#)

**BPX LINKS:** Click [here](#) for BPX web page, [here](#) for BPX Member Benefits, [here](#) for CMC Member Benefits, and [here](#) for discounted Colorado State Parks Pass.

**COVID PROTOCOLS:** Check [here](#) for latest CMC update on Feb 23.

**COTREX WEBINARS:** [Module 1](#) [Module 2](#)

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

**I-70 CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS:** Click [here](#)

For foothill outings, remember to check the website for your trip to make sure there are no closures due to mud, hunting, wildlife calving, etc.

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## LEAD THE PACK

### WELCOME NEW BPX TRIP LEADERS

Robert Koche, Denver

BPX is always looking for awesome CMC Trip Leaders from ALL CMC groups interested in expanding their trip repertoire by leading backpacking trips. Email your interest and experience to [cmcbpxtlc@gmail.com](mailto:cmcbpxtlc@gmail.com). There are a variety of paths to becoming a BPX Trip Leader, and the BPX Team will help you get there. Let's talk! More info on the paths to becoming a Leader can be found [here](#).

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## BPX COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!

The *BPX Committee Secretary* and the *BPX Events Coordinator* positions are waiting to be filled by you, the extraordinary CMC volunteer. We have monthly committee meetings every second Tuesday from 7:00 - 8:30 via Zoom, and sometimes in person. Expect 4-8 hours per month of volunteer work; sometimes more. Business/committee/non-profit organization volunteer experience is desirable, but not required. Reach out to find out more at [cmcbpx@gmail.com](mailto:cmcbpx@gmail.com).

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Want to contribute to "The Pack"? Send your backpacking photos and articles to [cmcbpxnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:cmcbpxnewsletter@gmail.com) so we can feature it in our Backcountry Cache Newsletter. Please include your name, location, and date.

**CMC Backpacking Section Supports Leave No Trace**

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**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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