



COLORADO MOUNTAIN CLUB

BACKPACKING SECTION



BACKCOUNTRY CACHE

A Newsletter for Members of CMC Backpacking Section

September 2025

CHAIR'S CORNER - Louise Campbell-Blair



Can you feel the beginning of Fall? Cooler nights and crisp mornings will be welcoming those of you squeezing in another BPX trip before the winter season starts. I'm slowly going through my gear, sorting, cleaning and doing a bit of patching here and there. I'm reminded how much money I have invested in this hobby but also how much enjoyment it brings me.

It's also time to send in photos and videos from your trips to share on the big screen at the BPX End of Season Party on October 25 (details below). We are really looking forward to seeing what you all got up to and hearing your stories. Don't be shy – we want it all!

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!

Talking of outstanding leaders - big thanks to our amazing Trip Leaders who led trips since our last newsletter: **Sharon Dawson, Emily Kachergis, Dave Molyneaux, Lisa Shroyer, and Craig Townsend**. Emily is a first-time BPX Trip Leader so special thanks to her for taking the plunge. Be sure to thank them when you see them out on the trail.

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



ALL BPX MEMBERS

BPX End of Season Party - October 25, 5-8:30pm

Join us 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.

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 LEADERS

Let's Fill the Fall Calendar!

We still have prime backpacking weeks ahead—cooler temps, fewer bugs, golden aspens—let's make the most of them! If you've been meaning to post a trip, now's the time. Even one more outing this season gives members another chance to get outside and builds momentum for next year.

Reminder, we track trip leader activity to budget for gifts and BPX swag. In order to stay active as a BPX trip leader, we ask that you schedule 1 trip every 2 years minimum. That means, if you didn't lead a trip in 2023 or 2024, this is your chance to remain active!

BPX EDUCATIONAL SERIES

Unleash the Power of your inReach Mini2 recording. Keith Stinebaugh shows you how to use your inReach Mini2 like a pro to enhance the safety for yourself and your companions.

Device Function and Smartphone Apps



BPX TRIP REPORTS

Wheeler Geologic Area + Halfmoon Pass from South Fork Saguache TH

Trip Leader Sharon Dawson - Denver Group

Wheeler Geologic Area did not disappoint!!

Seven CMC fine folks completed the Wheeler loop over Half Moon Pass in late August. It is a great alternative to just driving or walking in to see this unique area from Creede.

Hiking to our camp was saddened by all of the dead trees but that is a reality in many forested areas. On day 2, we headed up over Halfmoon Pass and took a right, to experience the loop in a counterclockwise direction which we all agreed was the best route. Seeing the area from every angle was spectacular. We stopped all along the way, taking pictures and oohing and ahing. We had to finally declare the photo shoot over as clouds were beginning to collect. We scampered back over the pass and back to our campsite. What a great day. On day 3, we packed it up and headed back to the cars. This is a sight that is worth the long drive!



Colorado Trail - Segment 11 South from Mount Elbert TH

Trip Leader Emily Kachergis - Denver Group

We went for a mellow fall backpacking trip at the foot of Mt Elbert, the start of Segment 11 of the Colorado Trail. Our sturdy crew set out on the trail as planned despite a very smoky Friday morning in Denver and cool, wet weather forecast in Leadville. The mist and occasional rain showers were pleasant actually as we hiked in to Herrington Creek, set up camp, and then day hiked to the beaver ponds near Lily Pond. We were amazed by how many large trees those creatures can cut down, drag about, and build with. Several of us spotted a skittish bear across the ponds as it quickly ran away.

We made it back to our tents and enjoyed some sunshine before a storm came through with booming thunder and hail. Friday night was chilly! Saturday dawned clear and promised to warm up. We hiked up to about 12,500 ft on Mt Elbert, with views obscured by smoke at first but slowly improving. We relaxed in some rocks at the "top" and enjoyed the warm sun and views of Twin Lakes and surrounding mountains. Mt Columbia and Mt Harvard to the south gleamed white.

The third day dawned warmer. We had an easy hike back to the cars with at least seven deer and a lot more yellow and orange leaves than when we had hiked in. I got five more miles of my CO Trail section hike, and it seems that a couple other folks might have been inspired to start theirs.





[Pine Creek Adventure \(AKA Lake Ann Plan B\)](#)

[Trip Leaders Lisa Shroyer and Emily Kachergis - Denver Group](#)

Our planned BPX trip to Lake Ann in the Collegiate Peaks Wilderness took a sudden turn when the La Plata Fire—sparked by an improperly extinguished campfire near the 14er—erupted right next to our destination. With closures spreading and the prospect of hiking deep into a one-way drainage with a wildfire nearby, we pivoted.

Instead, we headed north to Pine Creek Trailhead, just outside Buena Vista. We hiked 4 miles to the intersection of the Pine Creek Trail and the Colorado Trail. Our new home: a wide, beautiful valley with flowing water, mountain views, and plenty of space for tents.

We then ventured west for an exploratory hike, rewarded with views of Mt Belford and Mt Oxford. An enormous cumulonimbus cloud formed and we hustled back to camp just in time for an afternoon storm. We had a nice window for dinner and moose-watching over the meadow, where a mama and calf grazed (at a safe distance).

The next morning, armed with maps and curiosity, we set out south along the CT to find Rainbow Lake—an off-trail alpine gem. The route required map reading, bushwhacking, and teamwork, but our efforts paid off. We emerged at the lake, with big views and the satisfaction of having navigated there ourselves. After lunch, we returned to our trailhead, tired but smiling.



TREAD LIGHTLY

Sustainability, Recycling, Leave No Trace

Disposing of Bear Spray Containers

- How to dispose of expired or used cans of bear spray correctly?
- Move to an open area away from people, pets, and buildings.
- Simply empty the container before disposing of it in the regular city trash pick-up. To do this, press the valve and **release all contents and pressure**. Be sure to stand upwind in a well ventilated area when doing this so you won't harm yourself or others in the process.
- This practice is a great way to train yourself and others how to use the spray.



BPX TRIPS

Upcoming Trips With Openings*

Dates / Registration Date	Difficulty	Trip
Oct 1-3 Wed-Fri / Now	Challenging	Bison and McCurdy Peaks from Lost Park TH
Oct 9-10 Thu-Fri / Now	Moderate	Wigwam Park from Wigwam TH
Oct 15-19 Wed-Sun / Sep 24	Difficult	40 Mile Creek to Willow Gulch, Escalante UT

*As Of Sep 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.

SCHOOLS

DENVER	
DAY HIKER SCHOOL	More info here
INTRO TO HIKING SAFETY	Sep 24
CPR/AED	Oct 27

PIKES PEAK	
LAND NAVIGATION	Starts Oct 6

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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