



BACKCOUNTRY CACHE

A Newsletter for Members of CMC Backpacking Section

February 2024

CHAIR'S CORNER - Uwe Sartori

Here we are in February, in the *dead of winter*. February has always reminded me of Shakespeare's Macbeth. Certainly not backpacking. Me? A hard shift to skis, AIARE, ice axes, ice tools - hot fun in the wintertime. Meanwhile, a few, like BPX Trip Leader Daniel Schweissing and BPX Committee Member Maggie Burns, keep the fires burning for the backpacking community by offering up winter backpacking trips and a Winter Backpacking School. A shout-out for their good works.

The BPX Committee's work never stops. As I type this, it is likely that Louise Campbell-Blair, *Vice Chair & Treasurer*, is settling up our accounting and treasurer's reports while assisting Maggie Burns, *Social Media & Events Coordinator*, putting together our annual events: [Stake Your Claim](#) for our BPX Trip Leaders, and [BPX Trips Catalog Rollout](#) for BPX Members. Randy Blosser, *Special Projects Coordinator*, is hard at work curating our 2024 BPX Trips Catalog, with assistance from Craig Townsend. Lisa Shroyer, *BPX Trip Leader Coordinator*, is fine-tuning the BPX Trip Leader corps program, focusing on excellence and sustainability. Leila Murphy, *Communications Coordinator & Newsletter Editor*, and Susan Quechenberger, *Membership Coordinator*, have participated in software & systems testing, which when put into production will do some amazing things for CMC Sections' management and administration.

From an idea 5 years ago to address the paucity of backpacking trips to a self-sustaining community of passionate backpackers today, the success of the CMC Backpacking Section is a testimony to the work of the Committee Members both past and present, the BPX Trip Leaders, and the BPX Members who invest and partake in BPX offerings. I feel very bullish about our 2024 season. Could be the best ever. Do your part to make it so. Sign-up for a trip and keep the date.

BPX TRIP LEADERS

[STAKE YOUR CLAIM \(SYC\) March 6](#): The 5th Annual Stake Your Claim Event to kick off another great season of backpacking is an exclusive event for the BPX Trip Leaders to hear about the 2024 backpacking programs, review the BPX Trip Catalog, share good food, beverages, and times with fellow BPX leaders.

This year's SYC is a hybrid event, so leaders can either join in person at the AMC in Golden or via Zoom-- please indicate when signing up. Support BPX by showing up on this special night put together by the Backpacking Section Committee!

[SYC Signup](#)

BACKCOUNTRY INCIDENT MANAGEMENT (BIM): For those wanting to review, practice, and improve the skills needed to successfully manage the initial aspects of an unforeseen incident, CMC offers the Backcountry Incident Management School. The classes for this summer are: [May 18](#) and [Sept 24](#). Priority will be given to CMC trip leaders and school instructors, and successful completion of a recent Wilderness First Aid course is required. Course tuition is \$30. Enrollment opens April 1 for both sessions. Additional information can be found [here](#), and you can email Rich.McAdams@hotmail.com.

The BPX Committee believes this is a high value educational program for our BPX Trip Leaders and has scholarships to cover tuition. Please contact cmcbpx@gmail.com to see if you qualify.

BPX MEMBERS

2024 TRIP ROLLOUT April 11: A fun night to get together with your fellow outdoor enthusiasts & backpacker friends to plan YOUR upcoming season! We'll roll-out the trips for the spring, summer & fall, and share the stoke for those alpine lakes, dirt trails, & beautiful views! Food & drinks will be provided. This event is for BPX members AND BPX trip leaders. This is a hybrid event so you can join either in person at the AMC or via Zoom-- please indicate when registering.

[Trip Rollout Signup](#)

UPCOMING BPX TRIPS

BPX still has 2 winter backpacking/camping trips on the calendar! You can expect a ~2-3 mile snowshoe to the campsite, an optional day hike from camp (typically 3-6 miles), and then ~2-3 miles back to the trailhead.

Feb 23-24 Fri-Sat Moderate [Winter Camping Trip #2](#)

Mar 16-17 Sat-Sun Moderate [Winter Camping Trip #3](#)

Winter Camping School or equivalent and leader permission is required. Email dschweissing@gmail.com if you are interested in joining one of the trips.

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

SCHOOLS/EVENTS

DENVER

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

TRIP LEADER SCHOOL More info [here](#)

WILDERNESS TREKKING SCHOOL (WTS) Starts [Apr 2](#)

BACKPACKING SCHOOL Starts [Jun 4](#)

CPR/AED [Mar 19](#)

AVALANCHE RESCUE [Mar 2](#) [Mar 30](#)

AIARE 1 Starts [Feb 23](#) [Mar 22](#) [Mar 25](#)

NORTHERN COLORADO

MOUNTAIN HIKING COURSE Starts [Mar 12](#)

BASIC MOUNTAINEERING Starts [Apr 4](#)

PIKES PEAK

WTS WILDERNESS FUNDAMENTALS Starts [May 13](#) [Sep 16](#)

AVALANCHE RESCUE [Mar 3](#)

WINTER WILDERNESS SURVIVAL Starts [Mar 6](#)

INTRO TO BACKPACKING Starts [Jun 10](#) [Jul 29](#)

STATE

WILDERNESS FIRST AID/FIRST RESPONDER Multiple Offerings - Check CMC Website [here](#)

Continue to check the CMC website for additional courses.

BPX TRIP REPORTS

Burning Bear Trail

Trip Leader Daniel Schweissing - Denver Group

Our January camping trip was postponed for a week due to near hurricane strength 70mph winds. Our wait was rewarded, however, with near perfect winter camping conditions: balmy temps, fresh powder, and great company!!!

1 night

2 days

7 campers

8 miles of snowshoeing

20 degrees overnight low

35 degrees average daytime high

1300' elevation gain

9972' campsite elevation

10771' max elevation



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, and she will post them for you on FB. Send them to cmcbpxnewsletter@gmail.com to publish in the BPX Newsletter.

PARKING AT THE AMC

Due to the planned development of the COORSTEK property, CMC is advising all members to park at the American Mountaineering Center parking lot. The AMC is no longer contracting outside business for events, so this will free up space in the parking lot. There are new green *Park Mobile* signs at the AMC, but they do not apply to CMC members. There is no penalty for not paying, and you don't need anything special in your car.

Overnight parking is also permitted at the AMC, but email the office to let them know. If you are a School Director or Section Leader with a large group, contact the office ahead of time so they can arrange permission for your parking needs. More information can be found [here](#).

BPX TIP OF THE MONTH

Backpacking Tips for Rookies

Dialing in your gear takes practice and on-the-trail experience. You will make mistakes on your first few trips: you'll overpack, underpack, and pack the wrong stuff. But here are a few tips.

- **Weigh your stuff:** Use a kitchen scale to weigh and then record every item you load in your pack. If your pack ends up too heavy, this will help you identify the culprits and, if it's not a must have item, decide if it's worth the weight.
- **Shakedown:** Go on practice hikes with your pack fully loaded to make sure you can handle the weight and carry it comfortably. Have an experienced backpacker review your gear to get feedback on items that may not be needed and/or you don't have. Go on actual shakedown backpacking trips not too far from the trailhead to test out your gear. BPX plans to have several early season shakedowns led by experienced BPX Trip Leaders, so stay tuned!

- **Organize your pack:** Instead of willy-nilly throwing stuff in, plan how you pack it. Load your sleeping bag, pad, and camp clothes in the bottom, heavy items like food and cooking gear in the middle, and lightweight items you may need during the day on top and/or in outside pockets. The last thing you want to do as it starts downpouring is to pull everything out searching for your rain gear. Also make sure things like your toilet bag, guidebook, snacks, and phone are easily accessible.
- **GPS/Phone and Bear Spray:** Keep these on a shoulder strap where you can quickly get to them. (Yogi probably won't wait for you to dig thru your pack).
- **Guidebook/Maps:** Now days most backpackers use apps like COTREX or FarOut. But batteries do run out, and your phone may not survive a dip in the river. So having a guidebook and paper maps in a waterproof bag are good backups. But just take the pages of the guidebook that cover the area you are backpacking, and you only need easily accessible the pages and maps for the current day.
- **Limit dangly items:** Minimize the stuff you have hanging from the outside of your pack—the constant banging as you walk can be annoying to both you and your fellow backpackers. Too much stuff may be an indication that either your pack is too small, or you have too much stuff.
- **Pack Purchase:** Buy your pack last. If it's too big, you may be tempted to fill it up with stuff you don't need. But if it's too small you will struggle to pack the essential gear and may even damage the pack besides making it uncomfortable to carry. Also have it professionally fitted if possible. Nothing turns a person off more from backpacking than an uncomfortable pack.
- **Color coded stuff sacks:** Not everything needs to go in stuff sacks, but it's helpful to have different colors for the ones you do use so you know what's in them.
- **Consider multi-purposes for items:** Think about how you can use an item for multiple things--cooking pot as a cup and bowl; bear canister as a stool; extra clothes in a stuff sack as a pillow; phone as a GPS, satellite communications device (iPhone 14/15), eBook reader, and music player; etc.
- **Don't go overboard with essential items:** It's impossible to plan for everything that could happen on the trail (Murphy's law says you will need the one thing you don't have). So don't carry a huge first aid kit, battery bank, fuel canister, or multiple set of clothes. If you are backpacking with others, odds are good someone will be able to help you out.

Reference

Floro, Kelly. "19 Helpful Packing Tips for Beginner Backpackers." *The Trek*, 22 Aug. 2022, thetrek.co/19-helpful-packing-tips-for-beginner-backpackers/?mc_cid=19f57a9039&mc_eid=e732b5493d

BPX MEMBER INFO

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

BPX INSTAGRAM: [@co_backpacking_bpx](#)

BPX LINKS: Click [here](#) for BPX web page, [here](#) for BPX Member Benefits, and [here](#) for CMC Member Benefits.

BPX MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL: When renewing your CMC Membership, remember to choose the Backpacking Section for an additional \$20 on the SELECT YOUR SECTIONS page. You can also join/renew your BPX membership any time by clicking [here](#) or calling the CMC Office at (303) 279-3080.

DENVER GROUP MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES: [here](#)

FIRE INFO: [National Interagency Fire Center News](#) [Colorado Fire Restrictions](#) [Wildfire Risk Management Checklist](#)

Reminder that COTREX shows current closures due to incidents like wildfires whereas Gaia and other apps do not.

CMC Backpacking Section Supports Leave No Trace

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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