



# COLORADO MOUNTAIN CLUB

WESTERN SLOPE GROUP

**Canyon to Crest Call**  
**Western Slope Group**  
**January 2026**

**Happy New Year!**



Daniel, Jay and Doug on Doug Hemken's recent CMC XC ski trip to the County Line Trails on the Grand Mesa. Photo by Jill Mattoon. [See below on how to submit your favorite photo for the newsletter!](#)

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**Take the 2026 Western Slope Group Member Survey!**

Happy New Year, CMC & WSG members! As we start the new year, we would love to get your input on what activities the WSG should offer. [Please take our survey here](#). It should take less than 5 minutes to complete. The results will be published in the February newsletter. Thanks, and we look forward to seeing your input!

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## Welcome New WSG Trip Leader Doug Hemken!

Doug is also our newly elected WSG Outings Chair!

"I'm a recent transplant to the West Slope, having moved from Wisconsin in 2024. I've been camping, backpacking, and climbing for 50+ years. I've been involved in a variety of outdoor organizations, from Boy Scouts to the Wisconsin Climbers Association, and from the Friends of Devil's Lake State Park to the Wisconsin Dept of Natural Resources. I also spent four years in Peace Corps Nepal. Nowadays my outdoor endeavors are mostly focused on hiking, peak-bagging, ice climbing, Nordic skiing, and anything that takes me someplace new."





## What Trips Might We Post on the Western Slope?

As we all know, there's a nice collection of trails and places where we're able to recreate on the Western Slope. If it's too hot, we can go up in elevation. If it's too cold, we can go down in elevation. And we're so close to Utah! [Here's a list of all of the Western Slope "Routes and Places and Alternate Titles" that we have on the CMC website.](#) We're constantly updating this list so let us know at [WSGofCMC@gmail.com](mailto:WSGofCMC@gmail.com) if something's missing or needs to be corrected. WSG trip leaders may use this list to determine what trips to lead. WSG trip participants may use this list to request that specific trips be posted on the WSG calendar. Hike/ski/snowshoe/climb on!

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## Conservation Corner

by Claire McCullough, WSG Conservation Chair

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# WHAT A YEAR IT HAS BEEN AND WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

The assault on our public lands at the federal level has been disastrous, impacting public lands, wildlife and communities. There is a clear lean in favor of the fossil fuel industry. At the congressional level, the theme has been “permitting reform” legislation. There are a series of bad bills designed to undercut protections for our public lands. Examples include the Fix Our Forests Act, a proposal to gut protections for our national forests and grasslands. Another example is the SPEED Act. This proposed act would cripple NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) - our nation’s law that allows individuals and groups to have a voice and defend against logging and other extractive industries.

At the same time, terrible ideas and poisonous policies are moving forward through our federal agencies, at the direction of the executive branch. This planned, systematic dismantling of policies essential to public lands include attempts to rescind the Roadless Rule – a rule established in 2001 to protect 60 million acres from development and roads. Also, under attack is the Public Lands Rule which defines conservation as a “use” or land management action. There is a proposal to rescind from the Endangered Species Act, the inclusion of “habitat” in the definition of “harm.”

Although it is hard to imagine, this moment will pass. We must fight back now to see another day with a different congress, a different administration. We deserve a voice and have a voice in the decisions that are made impacting public lands. Never forget that these are our lands. And collectively, we have so much power as voters. Small acts can have a big impact. Comment writing, writing letters, making phone calls and attending public hearings may not seem very exciting. But as the year ends, take a moment to reflect upon the amount of time you spent this year outdoors enjoying our public lands and connecting with nature and friends. Please consider making a pledge to yourself, to the landscapes and wildlife, and to the next generations, to invest a fraction of those many hours spent on public lands giving back in the upcoming year. Our silence right now is the death of public lands.

Photo: Bear Ears National Monument. Credit Anne Lindgren, Getty Images Plus. New York Times.

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## Durango Area CMC Update

We're looking for Durango area volunteers to help plan activities (for which one does not have to be a leader)

and we're also looking for trip leaders. Trip leader school is free and online!

Contact our Durango Area Chair, Dan King, at [WSGofCMC@gmail.com](mailto:WSGofCMC@gmail.com) for more info or to get involved!

Join us in May in Blanding/Cedar Mesa, see below.

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## How Do I Find Out About New Trips After They're Posted?

The CMC website has a nice feature where you can get notified of new trips right after they're added or in a daily digest or in a weekly digest. Here's the steps for setting that up.

- 1) Login to your CMC account and click on "My Profile" under your name on the upper right.
- 2) Scroll down the page and click on "Edit Profile".
- 3) Scroll down the page to "Alerts and Notifications Preferences" and select your desired "Update Frequency". You'll also need to choose at least one activity. See the example below.
- 4) Scroll down the page and click on "Save".

**Alerts & Notifications Preferences**

**Update Frequency**  Send me an email with new items...

As soon as they are added  
 In a daily digest  
 In a weekly digest

**Activities**  
Of these types... (choose at least one to get notifications)

Adventure Travel  Biking  Camping  Canyoneering  Climbing  Conservation  Hiking  Mountaineering  Nordic Skiing  Snowshoeing  
 Volunteer Leadership

**Groups**  
With these Groups... (leave blank to choose all Groups)

**Courses, Clinics & Seminars**  
Of these types... (choose at least one to get notifications)

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## ALL CMC OUTINGS : [The CMC Trips List & Map](#)

Guests must create an account and sign a waiver before signing up for trips and may attend up to 2 trips.

If a trip is FULL, please sign up on the WAITLIST as participants may cancel!

## TRIPS: All of our activities are in one place at [Western Slope Group Calendar](#)

Saturday, 12/27. [Nordic Skiing – Grand Mesa - Skyway Nordic Trails](#). Moderate. Doug Hemken.

Thursday, 1/1. [Nordic Skiing – Grand Mesa - County Line Nordic Trails](#). Easy. Judy Mayne.

Saturday, 1/3. [Basic Snowshoe – Grand Mesa - Ward Lake Nordic Trails](#). Moderate. Jay Johnson.

Sunday, 1/18. [Basic Snowshoe – Grand Mesa - Griffith cutoff to West Bench TH](#). Moderate. Anne Keil.

Sunday, 1/18. [Nordic Skiing – Grand Mesa - Griffith cutoff to West Bench TH](#). Moderate. Jay Johnson.

Saturday, 1/24. [Nordic Skiing – Grand Mesa - County Line Nordic Trails](#). Easy. Judy Mayne.

2/6-8. [Climb – Lake City Ice Park](#). Moderate. Pikes Peak Group.

4/21-29. [Adventure Travel – Quito and The Galapagos Islands Multi-Sport Adventure](#). Fee.

5/5-13. [Adventure Travel – Quito and The Galapagos Islands Multi-Sport Adventure](#). Fee.

5/7-10 2026. [Blanding/Cedar Mesa UT multiday hiking](#). FULL. Book your own camping/motel. For more info or to get on the waitlist, email [WSGofCMC@gmail.com](mailto:WSGofCMC@gmail.com).

Saturday, 7/4. [Scramble – Mount Sneffels - Southwest Ridge](#). Challenging. Denver Group.

7/11&12. [Hiking- Kings and South King's Peak UT](#). Challenging. Denver Group

9/29-10/16. [Adventure Travel – Annapurna Basecamp](#). Fee.

## PRESENTATIONS / COURSES / EVENTS

Sunday, 1/11/2026. [Avalanche Terrain Avoidance- Field Day](#). Grand Mesa Lodge. Jay Johnson. Online self-paced lecture required before field day. \$40 members, \$50 nonmembers. Scholarship for leaders (free with 6 on-snow trips led in 5 years).

SAVE THE DATE! Wilderness First Aid in Montrose May 2 & 3, 2026.

[CMC Schools & Classes Course Catalog](#): \*\*For some classes and schools that are offered on the full CMC calendar (typically on the front range or via ZOOM), we can arrange field days on this side of the state but need a minimum number of participants between the various CMC groups. Please contact our **new WSG Schools Chair, Daniel Glatter**, at [WSGofCMC@gmail.com](mailto:WSGofCMC@gmail.com) if something interests you.

[Trip Leader Training](#): **We are seeking trip leaders!** The free training consists of self paced online modules and one training hike plus Wilderness First Aid. Contact [WSGofCMC@gmail.com](mailto:WSGofCMC@gmail.com) for additional info.

[ATA and AIARE: Avalanche Terrain Avoidance](#), 1/11/26. Schedule for avalanche training courses & AIARE by CMC in other locations see Course Catalog link above.

## Seeking Monthly Newsletter Content

We'd like your help! If you have requests for newsletter content or would like to contribute, let us know! The deadline to submit information, articles or photos is the **24th of each month** for the following month's newsletter. Email the WSG newsletter editor, Brenda Leach, at [WSGNewsEditor@gmail.com](mailto:WSGNewsEditor@gmail.com). Here are our [past newsletters](#).

# Western Slope Group Council

Chair, State Council Rep: Anne Keil (Montrose)

Vice Chair, Newsletter Editor: Brenda Leach (Ridgway)

Treasurer: John Broadbooks (Montrose)

Secretary, Annual Dinner Organizer: Jill Mattoon (Ouray)

Conservation Chair: Claire McCullough (Grand Junction)

Outings Chair: Doug Hemken (Delta)

Durango Area Chair: Dan King (Durango)

Marketing & Membership Chair: Tom Maceyka (Ridgway)

Schools Director: Daniel Glatter (Grand Junction)

We're on the CMC website at [Western Slope Group, CMC Groups - Colorado Mountain Club](#). The currently scheduled WSG Council meetings are 1/13/26, 3/17, 5/19 and 7/14. Zoom availability, time and location will be determined closer to the meeting dates. WSG members are welcome to attend.

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