



COLORADO MOUNTAIN CLUB

WESTERN SLOPE GROUP

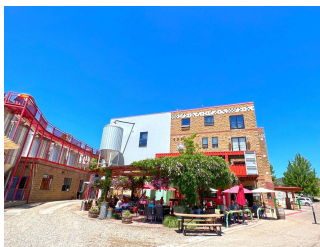
Canyon to Crest Call Western Slope Group March 2024



Buzzard Gulch CMC hiking trip close to Montrose, at the overlook with snowflakes falling.
[See below on how to submit your favorite photo for the newsletter!](#)

Upcoming WSG Social Gatherings

Starting in 2024, the WSG will be organizing several social gatherings. We'll hold them in brewpubs or other similar venues in Grand Junction, Paonia, Montrose, Ridgway or Durango. We will list the dates and venues as they're determined. If you have a venue or town that you'd like to recommend, let us know at WSGofCMC@gmail.com. Please sign up on the CMC website so that we can let the venues know how many to expect. Stay tuned!



Ska Brewing Company in Durango, Tuesday, March 19, 5-7:30pm

Join us at [Ska Brewing Company in Durango](#) to meet fellow local CMC members and leaders and kick off spring activities! The Sierra Club Southwest Colorado Group will also be attending. [Please register here](#) so we can let Ska know how many will be going.

Edgewater Brewery in Grand Junction, Sunday, April 14, 2-4pm



Kannah Creek's [Edgewater Brewery](#) is "your neighborhood brewpub, where the best burgers, brats, and craft beer in town are always paired with fun." It's located at 905 Struthers Ave in Grand Junction. [Please register here](#) so that we can let Edgewater know how many will attend. A hike will be scheduled in the Grand Junction area prior to the social gathering.

Conservation Corner

by Claire McCullough, WSG Conservation Chair

Efforts to Save the

Gunnison Sage Grouse



The Gunnison Sage-Grouse is well known for its spectacular mating ritual which occurs during early spring. Males display a long, fanned tail and bare yellow air sacs to puff themselves. Females gather in lekking grounds to decide which males to mate with. [A short video of this display may be viewed here.](#)

Due to plummeting populations, in 2014, the Gunnison Sage-Grouse was listed as threatened by the USFWS. It is estimated by Colorado Parks and Wildlife that only 4,300 birds remain. There are seven populations located in southern Colorado and one population located in southern Utah. Most of the birds are found in the Gunnison Basin. There are small, isolated populations in our Western Slope counties including the Pinon Mesa Population, Crawford Population, Cerro Summit/Sims Mesa Population, San Miguel Population and Dove Creek Population.

Historically, the Gunnison-Sage Grouse lived in sagebrush habitat found throughout southwestern Colorado, southeastern Utah, and northern New Mexico. Many years ago, there were large tracts of sagebrush habitat available for these birds to thrive, but available habitat has been reduced by 90 percent due to grazing practices, climate change, human disturbance, development, and commercial activities.

In 2022, the BLM initiated a review of its public lands management to form a new plan that ideally will limit negative impacts to the Gunnison Sage-Grouse habitat and populations. Plan alternatives were identified by the BLM and a comment period ensued. The CMC Western Slope Group submitted [a comment which can be viewed here.](#)

Photo credit: Tim Avery, Macauley Library, Utah.



Stewardship Opportunities

The West Slope Outdoor Volunteers (WSOV) was founded in 2021 and is a regional stewardship collaboration of several Western Slope non-profit organizations including Colorado Canyons Association, the Grand Valley Audubon Society and Great Old Broads for Wilderness. These founding organizations share volunteer and public lands stewardship resources throughout Western Slope communities.

On March 30, 2024, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., a cleanup effort will take place at the Escalante Staging Area. This is part of a celebration of the 15th anniversary of the Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area. From more details and to RSVP, [click this link](#) or [visit the WSOV website.](#)

Durango Area CMC Update

Join us for the 3/19 Spring Equinox social at Ska in Durango (info above) to kick off activities and trips starting this Spring! Save the dates 4/13 & 4/27 in Durango and 5/4 & 6/1 in Farmington, NM, for upcoming hikes (info below).

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! We will be updating happenings in this newsletter monthly. Contact us at WSGofCMC@gmail.com for more info or to get involved!

WSG Facebook Group

We have a private Facebook group called "CMC Western Slope Group". This group is available to post photos, announce last minute trips, trip reminders or activities. If you're interested, send a request in Facebook to join the group.

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 there are participants that cancel.

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

Wednesday, 2/28. [Nordic Skiing - Priest Lake](#). Moderate. Brenda Leach.

Saturday, 3/2. [Backcountry Ski Monarch](#). Boulder Group.

Saturday, 3/2. [Hunter Valley Snowshoe \(Aspen area\)](#). State CMC.

Sunday, 3/3. [Downhill Ski Monarch](#). Boulder Group.

Tuesday, 3/5. [Nordic Skiing - Grand Mesa, Ward Lake](#). Moderate. Brenda Leach.

Wednesday, 3/6. [Hiking - Rabbit's Ear Mesa](#). Easy. Mary Pitz.

Tuesday, 3/12. [Downhill Ski Beaver Creek](#). Gore Range Group.

Saturday, 3/23. [West End/North Bench Hike](#). Moderate. Anne Keil.

4/2-4. [Snowshoe Shrine Mountain Inn: Jay's Cabin](#). Roaring Fork Group.

Saturday, 4/13. [Hiking - Bird Hike at Oxbow Park and Preserve \(Durango\)](#). Easy. Mike Foster.

Saturday, 4/27. Celebrate Spring in the San Juans with this fun TBA Hike. Dan King & Mike Foster.

4/25-28. [Capitol Reef Tent/Car Camping and Hiking](#). Register for waitlist at WSGofCMC@gmail.com.

Saturday, 5/4. [Hiking - Spring Birds Along the Animas River in Farmington, NM](#). Easy. Mike Foster.

Saturday, 6/1. [Hiking - Early Summer Birds Along the Animas River in Farmington, NM](#). Easy. Mike Foster.

8/19-23. [In State Outing, YMCA of the Rockies Estes Park](#). State CMC, fee.

**All members and guests must sign a new liability waiver with the new website

PRESENTATIONS / COURSES / EVENTS

Tuesday, 3/19, 5-7:30pm. [WSG Social at SKA Brewing Company in Durango.](#)

Sunday, 4/14, 2-4pm. [WSG Social Gathering at Edgewater Brewery in Grand Junction.](#)

CMC Schools & Classes Webpage: **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 let us know 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. Leader training online is also available to current leaders as a refresher.

AIARE: Available from CMC on the Front Range. Click [here](#) and scroll down to see the schedule.

Wilderness First Aid: Coming in 2024. Schedule for other state locations [here](#).

WFA Instructors Wanted: Are you WFA or higher (WFR, medical professional, etc.) certified and interested in helping recertify/teach WFA to our members and leaders locally in 2024? More information [here](#). Teaching also renews your certification and the training is free.

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 **25th of each month** for the following month's newsletter. Email the WSG newsletter editor, Brenda Leach, at WSGNewsEditor@gmail.com. Here are our [past newsletters](#).

Western Slope Group Council

Chair & Outings Chair: Anne Keil (Montrose)

Vice Chair & Newsletter Editor: Brenda Leach (Ridgway)

Treasurer: John Broadbooks (Montrose)

Secretary: Jill Mattoon (Ouray)

Conservation Chair: Claire McCullough (Grand Junction)

We're on the CMC website at [Western Slope Group, CMC Groups - Colorado Mountain Club](#). Upcoming WSG Council meetings will be held March 18 and May 6. Zoom availability, time and location will be determined closer to the meeting dates. WSG members are welcome to attend.



Colorado Mountain Club
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