



Wild Connections News June 1, 2017

Dear {FIRST_NAME|Colleague},

What do we need to do to secure our future? A scientist asked this as he described the current die-off of coral in the northern part of the Great Barrier Reef on NPR this morning. Colorado is a long way from coral reefs, but even we experience weather created over the oceans. In an inter-connected world, here are some practical things you can do to secure our common future.

Experience the wildlands first hand

Getting out into the remote back country will inspire you to take action for public lands protection, as well as renew your spirit and let you get acquainted with like-minded people.

Thompson Point Hike, a BLM Wildlands Outing

Saturday, June 10, 2017 8:30 am to 3:30 pm



Escape to the scent and shade of ponderosa pines at Thompson point, northwest of Canon City. Thompson Point provides postcard quality scenery of the snowcapped Sangre de Cristo Mountains draped above central Colorado's rugged

canyon country. Moderate to strenuous 8 mile hike, 1850' elevation gain. Leader John Sztukowski, 817-939-4239 or e-mail john@wildconnections.org

Thirtyone Mile Mountain Hike, a BLM Wildlands Outing

Sunday, June 18 9:30 am to 3:30 pm



Thirtyone Mile Mountain, northwest of Canon City, contains a mix of habitats, from a riparian corridor to high montane grasslands, as well as spruce, aspen, and bristlecone pine forests. These promote connectivity and wildlife movement across

the landscape and provide wildlife with refuges from more intensively-used land. Moderate 8 mile hike, 1000' elevation gain. Leader Jim Lockhart 719-385-0045 or e-mail jlock@datawest.net

Gray Back Peak in Beaver Creek Proposed Wilderness

Saturday, July 8 1:45 to 5:00 pm



A long ridge towering over a wooded valley and topped by Gray Back Peak lies hidden behind Cheyenne Mountain west of Colorado Springs. Moderate half-day 4 mile hike, 650 feet elevation gain. Leader John Stansfield, 303-660-5849 or email jorcstan@juno.com.

**Stand up for National Monuments
Deadline July 10th**

President Trump directed the [Department of Interior](#) to "review" 22 National Monuments in eleven states plus 5 National Marine Monuments. You can comment on these at the [Department of Interior comment site](#) or [MonumentsForAll.org](#) by **July 10th**.

[Bears Ears National Monument](#), just over the border in Utah, was given an extraordinarily short deadline of only 15 days for comments! The Center for Western Priorities [analyzed a representative sample](#) of roughly 857,000 comments submitted through the DOI web site or as bundles from 49 groups. **An overwhelming majority (99.6%) was favorable to national monuments**, and 89% of the bundled comments mentioned Bears Ears specifically.



The main target in Colorado is [Canyons of the Ancients](#), an amazing trove of history, with the highest density of ancestral Puebloan sites in the nation. Located northwest of Cortez along the state line, it is so new that there are no signs or a visitor center. Prior to designation thousands of cultural artifacts were illegally removed from the area. The Monument coexists with other activities including livestock grazing and gas production, and boosts the economy in Montezuma County.



Other Colorado Monuments, such as [Chimney Rock](#) and [Brown's Canyon](#), appear to be safe for now because they are less than the 100,000 acres criteria for the current review.

[Grand Staircase-Escalante](#) (Utah) and [Rio Grande del Norte](#) (New Mexico) are on the review list. You may have visited these close-by exceptional places. The five Marine Monuments - [Marianas Trench](#) and [Pacific Remote Islands](#) (Pacific), [Northeast Canyons and Seamounts](#) (Atlantic), [Papahānaumokuākea](#) (Hawaii) and [Rose Atoll](#) (American Samoa) protect millions of acres of ocean locations that represent the huge diversity of ocean life.



Please go to the [Department of Interior comment page](#) or [MonumentsForAll.org](#) to voice your support for

Blodgett Peak Open Space BioBlitz

Saturday June 17 10 am to 2 pm



Blodgett Peak Open Space on the western edge of Colorado Springs has many animal and vegetation species and rock features. The Colorado Springs TOPS council's volunteer scientists will document the natural features of the area.

Other activities will be open to the public. Wild Connections and other groups will be there to share information and service opportunities. Family friendly, no registration.

Full details are on Wild Connections' [Events](#) page. Register for the hikes with the trip leader. Trips are sponsored by Wild Connections, Pikes Peak Group Sierra Club, and Central Colorado Wilderness Coalition.

Bring your energy to a restoration project

Investing your time and energy in a hands-on restoration project may be the ultimate back-country experience, and not nearly as dangerous as summiting the 14ers! Volunteers are needed for these projects this summer. Save the dates – more information later.

We will *revisit previous projects* to check on the state of habitat recovery and secure closures. Some members of the group will be doing detailed documentation to add to the monitoring files, and everyone will learn about the features of the area, restoration techniques, and how restoration benefits the land.

- **Farnum Peak – Saturday July 15**
- **Selkirk Gulch – Sunday July 16**
- **Green Mountain - TBD**

Later in the summer, *two new restoration projects* are scheduled. These continue a recent focus on an arc of resilient roadless areas across northern Park County.

- **Packer Gulch Wednesday-Thursday, August 2-3** Packer Gulch on the west side of Farnum Peak Roadless Area has several illegal routes that intrude into the roadless area. Post and cable closures and revegetation work will continue the protection activities for this important wildlife habitat area.
- **Rock Creek, September** A rutted, dead end road is lined with eroding streamside campsites on the boundary of Lost Creek Wilderness. The creek is habitat for newly reintroduced greenback cutthroat trout. This September, you can assist Wild Connections and the Forest Service in road and campsite closure activities.

Canyon of the Ancients and others. Remember that **you must mention the Monument by name** to have it counted properly. .

Keep tracking BLM's Management Planning

Thanks for taking action and sending a public comment to the BLM Royal Gorge Field Office regarding the Preliminary Draft Alternatives phase of BLM's Eastern Colorado Resource Management Plan revision.

The BLM will be compiling and incorporating these comments into their management plan revision efforts for the next several months as they work on the next step in this plan: the Draft Alternatives. The Draft Alternatives are currently scheduled to be released in early 2018, with a 90 day public comment period. The plan revision in its entirety is on pace to be completed in early 2019. Wild Connections will be actively engaged with the BLM throughout this process and will host hikes and events at some of these spectacular BLM wild lands!

Spread the word to your friends and family

[Forward this message to a friend](#)



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www.instagram.com/wildconnectionsorg/

Some state and federal web pages are being disabled. If one of the links above doesn't work, try googling.

Thanks for the photos

Left, top to bottom: Thompson Point, Kate Spinelli; Thirtyone Mile elk herd, Wild connections; Fountain Valley from Gray Back Peak, Rcik Shan; Blodgett Peak, Wickipedia.

Right, top to bottom: Bears Ears, Patagonia; Conyons of the Ancients, www.city.com; Rio Grande del Norte, Pinterest; Coral in Papahanaumokuakea NM, ThingLink.

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