

# *Friends of Mount Evans and Lost Creek Wildernesses*



April Photo Contest Winner: **Peter Kulvete**

Near McCurdy Peak in Lost Creek Wilderness

“For me this photo represents Man vs Nature and the ongoing impact on our wilderness areas. LCW is one of my favorite wilderness areas to explore and photograph.” - *Peter Kulvete*

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# FOMELC Board Members

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## COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS:

The safety of our community is our top priority, and we are committed to doing our part to limit the spread of COVID-19 (aka coronavirus). We are closely monitoring guidelines from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment (CDPHE), and how these might affect our programs. We are also coordinating with our US Forest Service partners to remain in compliance with their COVID-19 response guidelines. Stay Safe and Healthy!

## FOMELC Mission Statement:

The Mount Evans and Lost Creek Wildernesses encompass 194,400 acres with over 170 miles of trails in Colorado's Pike and Arapaho National Forests.

We work in partnership with the US Forest Service, engaging in education, outreach and stewardship activities to preserve the wilderness character of these lands for current and future generations.

*Friends of Mt Evans & Lost Creek Wildernesses  
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Evergreen, CO 80439*

<https://fomelc.org/>



**“Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wildness is a necessity” - John Muir**

## Note from the Chair – Spring is Here (Really!) - By Peter Vrolijk

After I wrote last month's note, I thought that I would no longer be able to use photos with snow in them. Yet while I write this note, big, clumped snowflakes are falling heavily outside my window. It must be springtime...

Springtime means that we begin to get excited about the work to accomplish over the summer. First up is spring training where we help volunteers become more knowledgeable about wilderness in order to promote a more deeply satisfying volunteer experience. Current conditions prevent us once again from offering our successful in-person class, and we are putting considerable effort into offering some of the same content in an individual learning format. Please consider participating in this training, especially if you have never attended before. Veterans of the course will also benefit from returning. We hope that conditions will allow us to host in-the-field training over the course of the summer, perhaps combined with work activities or wilderness hikes.



*Although this part of the Cub Creek trail just outside of the Mount Evans Wilderness is covered in spring snow, the time when this trail is clear will arrive soon.*

We are also excited to welcome Steve West back to lead the trails program. In addition, we are doubly excited to welcome Wyatt Stanland to a trails leadership position. We look forward to a strong trails program this summer, and in the next month or two you will read more about program goals for this summer. Two new features include a dedicated effort of trail projects on the Payne Creek trail (Lost Creek Wilderness) and an Adopt-a-Trail program. Watch for volunteer project days on Payne Creek in the coming months and sign up to help out! Adopt-a-Trail is intended to commit a small group of volunteers to one of several possible trailheads for the entire summer. While details are still being worked out, the intent is for that group to visit the trailhead each month throughout the summer, provide trailhead maintenance, and offer information about wilderness and FOMELC to users. Upcoming newsletters will offer further details on this program, but now is a good time to start forming your volunteer group!

For now, I throw another log on the fire and wait out this latest snowstorm. I already anticipate finding the first Pasque flower and look forward to how all this moisture will create an abundance of wildflowers in a couple of months.

*- Peter*



# Welcome to our Trail Coordinators!

## *Steve West*

“Since 1991, I have been involved in many project team positions with Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado (VOC): Crew Leader, Team Lead, Technical Adviser, Crew Leader Manager and Tool Manager. I have also been involved with the Outdoor Stewardship Institute (OSI) as a Master instructor since the organization's inception. I have been an instructor for Crew Leadership and various trail skills, which includes rock walls, stairs and drainage structures. I have been certified by the USFS as a crosscut saw “C” feller/bucker/evaluator in order to evaluate volunteers bucking skills.



I became involved with the Friends of Mt. Evans and Lost Creek Wilderness in 2005, training volunteers and leading crews to perform trail maintenance. Trained volunteers have become so important to maintain the wilderness characteristics of the areas.”



## *Wyatt Stanland* *Deputy Trails Coordinator*

“My name is Wyatt Stanland and I am excited to be the Deputy Trail Projects Coordinator for FOMELC! Wilderness has held profound importance to me, ever since I was a kid learning bushcraft skills in Connecticut. I have a deep love for the Mount Evans and Lost Creek Wildernesses, special places where solitude and adventure are easily found. From the varied geology and enveloping forests of Lost Creek, to the alpine tundra and ancient bristlecones of Mount Evans, these are places where history, solitude, and natural science intersect. I spent five years as a landscaper and stone mason, where I learned tool, material, and safety techniques that translate well to trail building and maintenance. I also have training as a trail crew leader and am a certified sawyer.

I am excited to bring a land ethic of Leave No Trace, solitude, and community along with my enthusiasm and experience to the trails program at FOMELC!”





## Crosscut Saw Training and Certification

Buffalo Creek, May 15 and 16

**2 Slots Open for FOMELC Members  
Sign Up Deadline April 30th**

In this two-day training, you will learn crosscut saw techniques, procedures and best practices for safety and effectively clearing trails in challenging situations. The course will cover basic sawyer tool care and maintenance.

The course work be a mix of online modules, classroom learning using Zoom and hands-on field experience. The cost for the 2-day training is \$60. The workshop is currently waitlisted, but it is anticipated that class numbers will increase.

If you are interested, the sign up link is: [Crosscut Saw Class Registration](#)

**FOMELC has 2 reserved slots for this training due to the increased numbers.**

**Make sure that you note FOMELC on the sign up page.**

Training costs are reimbursable when the individual commits to trail projects for FOMELC.

# FOMELC Spring Training 2021 For New and Returning Volunteers

Dee Lyons

We had to cancel 2020 Spring Training due to COVID19. We had to think “outside the box” this year to work out how to put on our annual Spring Training Program.

We are currently working on a virtual online Spring Training Program for our new and returning volunteers. The program will be set up on a google drive and when you register, you will be given access to the training. One of the modules is an on-site wilderness trail patrol training with a mentor in which you will be given instructions in the module. Once you complete the training and sign up as a member, you can connect with various volunteer activities, during which you will receive in-the-field training. All COVID protocols will be a priority.

If you are new to FOMELC and are interested in attending this training, let us know. [dee@fomelc.org](mailto:dee@fomelc.org)

If you are a returning FOMELC previous member and would like to brush up on a few training opportunities, we would love to see you back!

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## We Want to Hear from You!

Help us make this newsletter educational as well as informative. Send us your suggestions for articles or subjects that will educate us on the way to our mission.

Please let us know what you would like to see in the Newsletter and whether the articles we’ve been publishing have been helpful. [dee@fomelc.org](mailto:dee@fomelc.org)

You asked for it!

We had a request for geology in Lost Creek Wilderness –

Watch for this article in the May Newsletter!

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## Purchasing Items from Amazon?

Go to <https://smile.amazon.com/> and order from that site. Before ordering, select your charity to be “Friends of Mount Evans & Lost Creek Wilderness.” From then on, all of your shopping will generate 0.5% of the purchase to FOMELC. Thank you!

# PHOTO CONTEST

By Deb Grass (FOMELC Volunteer)

## *Show off your Mount Evans & Lost Creek Wilderness Photos.*

We thought a photo “contest” would be a fun way to engage FOMELC volunteers and our newsletter readers as a way to promote the pristine beauty of Mount Evans and Lost Creek Wildernesses.

Each month the Board committee will review submitted photos to determine that month’s winner and runner-up. The winning photo will be displayed on our newsletter. Both the winner and runner-up photos will be displayed on our [gallery \(click here\)](#) page.

### Submission Guidelines:

- You must be signed up for our [Newsletter \(click here\)](#) to submit photos.
- Each individual may submit no more than 2 photos (in .jpg format) per month. Photos should be submitted to [photos@fomelc.org](mailto:photos@fomelc.org) and should include photo location and any personal thoughts you may have about the photo or area.
- Photos may not include people or dogs (landscape and flora/fauna only).
- **The submission deadline is the 13th of each month.**
- Winners will be determined based upon the review of judges of how well the photos represent the wilderness characteristics of the Mount Evans or Lost Creek Wilderness areas.

There will be no payments made to individuals submitting their photos.

By submitting an image, you give FOMELC permission to post the image, your name, and comments on our website and to use the image in promoting the club - you of course retain ownership of the image.

***Thanks in advance for your submissions and Happy Photographing!***

***Please join us for our May Zoom Meeting!***

***Friends of Mt. Evans & Lost Creek Wildernesses***

***Spring Volunteer Kickoff***



**Wednesday May 19<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm**

***Are you interested in learning about volunteer opportunities with FOMELC?***

*Then join us to learn about our current plans for FOMELC and the many ways you can volunteer. During the meeting, each of the Volunteer Coordinators will introduce themselves and the work they do. It will be an Open Forum presentation so you will be able to ask questions and learn the details of each activity.*

**Trails Coordinator:** Steve West [Steve@fomelc.org](mailto:Steve@fomelc.org) & Wyatt Stanland [Wyatt@fomelc.org](mailto:Wyatt@fomelc.org)

**Weed Projects Coordinator:** Alan Rockwood [Alan@fomelc.org](mailto:Alan@fomelc.org)

**Training & Newsletter:** Dee Lyons [Dee@fomelc.org](mailto:Dee@fomelc.org)

*This activity is an excellent opportunity to help Wilderness programs from home!*

*The meeting will be held via Zoom on **Wednesday May 19th at 7 pm***

**Please RSVP to [kay@fomelc.org](mailto:kay@fomelc.org)** if you wish to attend the session.

***Of all the paths you take in life, make sure a few of them are dirt. - John Muir***





# FROM THE WEED PATCH

Alan Rockwood



As I write, spring snows are with us (thankfully)! How long they last will shape our lives in the mountains. This is particularly true for FOMELC's weed program. It may be several more weeks before we know when is the best time to start our treatment projects.

Our good news is that the core program (\$12,500) is now fully funded. This money is used to fund a contractor that takes on infestations too large for our volunteer corps, even though volunteer efforts are crucial for treating lingering infestations and attacking newly found infestations before they grow. FOMELC's application to the States Noxious Weed Fund was awarded \$10,000, and this week we learned that the US Forest Service Invasive Weed Program is contributing \$2,500 for our activities. **Thank you, volunteers!** Your dedication and accomplishments give FOMELC the creditability for seeking grants. Based on your track record, funders have confidence they will receive a "high return on their investment" in our program. Your efforts are doing so much to preserve the quality of our Wildernesses.

We have another ambitious program this season treating infestations identified in previous years. Our goal is to replicate last year's strong volunteer effort, both in terms of number of individuals and total hours contributed, and to see those numbers grow. While last year presented tremendous challenges in securing volunteers – a late start as COVID protocols were established by the USFS, an early end due to killing frost, and a complete absence of the venues where volunteers were recruited – we hope that some of these difficulties will be easier this year. Along the way we kill some weeds, have some laughs and enjoy being in the wilderness.

As in past years, the Weed Team out of the Boulder Ranger District will again offer a working/training session that we will schedule for early June depending on their schedule. From there we plan to begin the season at Goose Creek Trailhead (Hankins Gulch area) followed by Rolling Creek. By the first of July, our focus will shift for a while to Mount Evans. **Watch for details on these other events in our May newsletter.**

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**Note:** May 17<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> is National Invasive Species Awareness Week. There will be some great virtual programs. I am intrigued by the opening lecture "The Climate Crisis and Invasive Species." Find out how you can participate by visiting [NISAW.org](https://www.nisaw.org). Also, look for local events.

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Remember on our own properties, the first weed to pull likely will be cheat grass (downy brome). It is an annual and that is the first to germinate, grabbing the moisture. It matures quickly creating lots of BTUs to spread wildfires in the summer.



# Grazing History and the Lost Creek Wilderness

Ralph Bradt

## Some background on grazing and the Lost Creek area

The South Park area has provided rich grazing for hundreds of years, feeding great herds of bison, antelope, and elk since before recorded history. Following the influx of prospectors to the South Park area, the native herds were hunted and cattle herds were brought in to feed the newcomers. These events combined to push the remaining game into the edges of the park, including the Lost Park and Craig Park areas on the west side of today's Lost Creek Wilderness. Lost Park's isolation provided a refuge for the last known herd of wild bison. However, even the cattle driven through the area by W. W. Webster pressured the bison.

For a number of years around 1870, Webster drove his cattle from his ranch in Webster Park north of today's Wigwam trailhead into East Lost Park and Lost Park, where he summered his herd, and in the fall drove them to the mining camps for sale. The route of his drive into Lost Park is now the Wigwam Trail.

In 1887, with the construction of a road into Lost Park (now the Colorado Trail from the Rolling Creek trailhead to the North Fork trailhead), the bison herd's days were numbered. Despite a number of newspaper articles expressing concern over their situation, poachers killed the last members of the herd in 1901.



*1898 Lost Park herders cabin*



*2015 Remains of East Lost Park cattleman's shelter*

Prior to the creation of the forest reserves in 1892, cattle grazing was basically unregulated and the range was becoming overgrazed and depleted. Under the management of the General Land Office, grazing began to be regulated on the forest reserves. It was with the transfer of the forest reserves to the Department of Agriculture and the newly created Forest Service in 1905 that control of grazing on National Forest lands was begun in earnest through the issuing of grazing permits. Allotments were created and subdivided into pastures. Stock drives were created and marked to provide access to the allotments and drift fences were constructed to contain the stock and prevent them from drifting between assigned pastures.



*Stock drive sign*



*Former stock drive, now part of the Colorado Trail*



*Rock Creek cow camp*



*2020 The remains of an old drift fence in the Wilderness south of Lost Park.*

Permits were issued annually, assigning pastures and setting limits of how many stock could be grazed and for how long. Allotments were monitored for condition and pasture use rotated to prevent degradation of the range.

In 1925, the National Forests were authorized to grant 10 year grazing permits. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 provided for the further regulation of grazing on the public lands to improve rangeland conditions and regulate their use.



*1920 Grazing in East Lost Park*

### **So what about grazing in the Wilderness?**

In order to pass the 1964 Wilderness Act, a compromise was made to allow existing grazing permits to continue in Wilderness. Although grazing is contrary to the untrammeled character of Wilderness, the grazing compromise made it possible to secure bipartisan support for the Wilderness Act even in states where ranching was a significant part of the economy. Under the Special Provisions section, Wilderness Act states, “the grazing of livestock, where established prior to the effective date of this Act, shall be permitted to continue subject to such reasonable regulations as are deemed necessary by the Secretary of Agriculture.”



Today, there are six allotments that extend into the Lost Creek Wilderness, with 55,750 acres of those allotments actually in the Wilderness. Four of these allotments have active permits and the Wilderness acres in those permitted acres is 32,270 acres. However, the actual number of cattle on these acres is relatively low and cattle are rarely seen in the Wilderness.

Obviously, cattle are a non-native species, and they are problematic in that they can be a significant vector for the introduction of noxious weeds but, under permit, they are allowed to be in their assigned pastures in the Lost Creek Wilderness. Perhaps over time more allotments will fall vacant and the influence of cattle in the Wilderness will fade. Meanwhile, Wilderness grazing, as with all grazing on National Forests, is monitored and managed to prevent overgrazing and natural resource degradation.

