

# Friends of Mount Evans and Lost Creek Wildernesses



## April Newsletter 2023

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## **Note from the Chairman by Steve West**

### **WE NEED VOLUNTEERS**

Spring is upon us. For too many of us, this means spring cleaning: house, yard, or garden. Trails in the Mt. Evans and Lost Creek Wilderness areas also need “spring cleaning.” The Friends of Mt. Evans and Lost Creek Wilderness (FOMELC) provide this spring cleaning to both areas as volunteers for the Forest Service.

There are several Wilderness areas where we need volunteers:

- Volunteers are needed to hike the trails to record data on their cell phone using an app that was developed by the Forest service for these two areas. Training will be provided to instruct volunteers to use this app. This will allow FOMELC trail crews to prioritize work that is an issue.
- Once the priorities of the trail issues are established, FOMELC trail crews hike the trails to correct the issues. What kind of issues? Downed trees blocking the trail, water flowing down the trail causing damage, and brush that is encroaching into the trail. We encourage you to volunteer to help make a more pleasant hike.
- Invasive weeds are an issue throughout both wildernesses. FOMELC is a leader in eradicating these weeds. Invasive weeds are a menacing threat to wilderness native vegetation and wildlife. Invasive weeds crowd out the plants and can be toxic to wildlife that make up the natural ecosystem. FOMELC volunteers are trained to identify and eradicate these plants.
- With the significant increase of backpackers into the wilderness areas, campsites both legal and illegal sites have proliferated. Illegal campsites do not enhance wilderness characteristics. They need to be removed and the area rehabilitated. Your volunteering will have a significant impact in eliminating these sites. Training is provided by our trained crew leaders.

We hope that by reading this article you get the sense that trained volunteers are needed to support the Forest Service and these two wilderness areas. Please consider volunteering with FOMELC. This is the link to our website for further information: <https://fomelc.org/volunteer-signup>

- *Steve*



# Invasive



## From the Weed Patch – Alan Rockwood

In 2023, FOMELC will again have an aggressive noxious weed eradication program for both wilderness areas. With successful grant applications, we have more funds for contractor-led treatments than in the past. As the FOMELC volunteer weed program has expanded and our inventory of infested sites has improved, we again need contractor support. Through coordination with the new weed manager for the Pike National Forest, FOMELC volunteers will be shifting resources away from certain trailhead infestations to backcountry sites. For example, Pike National Forest's weed team will treat the Rolling Creek/Colorado Trail Trailhead area with ATV-mounted equipment allowing volunteers to begin treating the eastern end of the Payne Creek Trail and maintain control of Rolling Creek Trail infestations.

We have developed a preliminary schedule of volunteer weed projects that are on page 4 in this Newsletter. There will be fifteen core treatment projects across both wildernesses. Other treatments may be added during the season, such as retreatment of an area due to rain or a newly identified infestation. Past experience indicates it is best to begin the season in Lost Creek Wilderness targeting thistles. In July, our focus shifts to Mount Evans thistle infestations. Later in the season, we can effectively treat orange hawkweed and yellow toadflax. This has been an effective approach to scheduling. Volunteers will be working directly with agency land managers on several projects. Nick Race from the Pike National Forest will participate in most Lost Creek Wilderness projects. Weed teams from the Colorado Noxious Weed Program (Department of Agriculture) and the Mount Evans State Wildlife Area will join us in treating the Captain Mountain Trailhead. We will also need a strong turnout from the FOMELC team to coordinate with the VOC volunteers on July 13<sup>th</sup> and August 11<sup>th</sup>.

We will again offer an in-the-field training program for herbicide treatments before the season starts. It will be on **Wednesday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, at the Cub Creek Trailhead** (Black Mountain Drive, Evergreen). The weed team from the Southern Zone of the Arapahoe-Roosevelt National Forest will lead the program. It covers FOMELC's approach to wilderness weed treatments, handling herbicides, safety, and calibration of spraying equipment. This is a great way to start the season, meet our Forest Service partners, and learn how an integrated weed control program sustains a healthy native wilderness habitat.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

– *Alan*

# 2023 FOMELC Invasive Weed Projects

## Tenative Schedule

Date	Day of Week	Project Site	Comment
14-Jun	Wednesday	Cub Creek East	Training: Intro to Herbicide Treatments
22-Jun	Thursday	Rolling Creek	Two teams - Rolling Creek, Payne Creek East
29-Jun	Thursday	Goose Creek	Hankins Gulch
8-Jul	Saturday	Indian Creek	Access from SWA
13-Jul	Thursday	South Meadow Capt Mtn	VOC Partnership (date fixed)
16-Jul	Sunday	Beaver Meadows	Orange hawkweed - plus
20-Jul	Thursday	Capt. Mtn Trailhead	Interagency - State and USFS
23-Jul	Sunday	Wigwam Creek	Trailhead to mile 2
29-Jul	Saturday	Beartrack Lakes	Orange hawkweed original site
2-Aug	Tuesday	Resthouse	Access from Lincoln Lake
5-Aug	Saturday	Magic Valley	Access from Beaver Meadows Trail
11-Aug	Friday	Pedee Creek	VOC Partnership (date fixed)
19-Aug	Saturday	Beartrack Lakes	All-hands-day, two teams- toadflax, hawkweed #2
24-Aug	Wednesday	Lower Goose Creek	Yellow toadflax and Can. thistle on social trails
2-Sep	Saturday	Upper Beartrack Lakes	Access from Mount Evans Road
4-Sep	Monday	Beaver Meadows sites	Annie's Meadow and others, 2nd, <i>IF NEEDED</i>

## *FOMELC EVENTS & NEWS*

**You can sign up for all events at:** <https://fomelc.org/volunteer-signup>

Check sign up regularly since events will be loaded into the system weekly.

## 2023 Wilderness Stewardship Training Program

Online training for new volunteers is being updated with new data and will soon be available. Contact Dee Lyons at: [dee@fomelc.org](mailto:dee@fomelc.org) to register for the free training. All new volunteers are encouraged to attend the online training.



Wyatt Stanland  
Trails Coordinator

## ***Greetings from the Trail!***

The FOMELC trail program is organizing a **Trail Projects Committee**, and we would like you to join!

The vision for the committee is a group of volunteers that have a desire to learn more about trail work and to collaborate with other like-minded volunteers. The committee will be very informal, where you can take on more volunteer responsibility within FOMELC if you choose.

### **The goals of this committee are to:**

- Open communication channels between volunteers and trail program leadership.
- Expand opportunities for volunteers beyond physical trail work.
- Share knowledge about trail maintenance needs, trail restoration and improvement techniques, and training opportunities between volunteers.
- Encourage volunteers to grow their crew leadership skills.

This committee will meet informally for about an hour once or twice a year to share knowledge, discuss strategy and vision for the trail program, and provide feedback on the work accomplished the previous year.

If you are interested in being a part of this committee, email me at: [wyatt@fomelc.org](mailto:wyatt@fomelc.org)

## **2023 Trail Projects**

Following our successful 2022 season where we adopted the Abyss Trail, we will be mixing it up this year. Our May project will continue on the Abyss Trail to complete a series of stone stairs on a steep and washed out section of trail. For our June, July, and August projects, we will adopt the Beartrack Lakes trail from the Camp Rock Trailhead.

Following the success of our weekend project in Lost Park last year, we will be hosting another weekend project this September! The location of this project is yet to be determined.

The 2023 trail projects schedule will be posted in <https://fomelc.org/volunteer-signup> in April, so watch out for that!

As always as spring approaches, it is almost time to start patrolling the trails again, so update that crosscut saw certification, get your Survey123 ready, and get out on trail patrols!



## **Your Call to Join the Trail Patrol Committee**

The Friends of Mt. Evans and Lost Creek Wildernesses are looking for a group of dedicated wilderness stewards to lead or join the Trail Patrol Committee. Trail Patrols are a primary and essential source of trail upkeep and information for FOMELC and the Forest Service, and you can grow your part in this relationship! Members on this committee will get to organize and analyze wilderness patrol data in ArcGIS to guide volunteers to patrol needed trails.

They will work with the Forest Service to clear deadfall off high priority trails and ensure these trails are good to go for trail users early in the season. Most importantly, members of this committee will get to patrol the wilderness trails as much as they want, and will feel a heightened sense of connection to the wildernesses they serve!

Specific responsibilities include:

- Trail Patrolling
  - Patrol priority 1, 2, and 3 trails, recording data in Survey123 and cutting out deadfall.
- Guiding other Volunteers
  - Members of this committee can, but don't have to, guide new volunteers on mentor hikes to grow the next generation of trail patrollers.
  - Members will communicate and coordinate with other volunteers to send them out on patrols on high priority trails early in the season.
- Reporting Data
  - Members will analyze and format data in Survey123 and provide annual reports to the Forest Service. This data is vital to display FOMELC's impact, secure the club grant funds, and to provide the Forest Service with insight into trail user habits, hot spots, and more.

Perks of volunteering:

- Get to volunteer in a meaningful way in the wilderness areas that you love!
  - Work with passionate, dedicated volunteers and Forest Service Rangers to educate wilderness users and steward these special places.
- Room for growth into other aspects of wilderness stewardship that interest you.
  - Access to wilderness skills training including Crosscut Saw training, Trail Crew Leader training, wilderness program knowledge sharing events, and more.

**Contact:** [wyatt@fomelc.org](mailto:wyatt@fomelc.org)



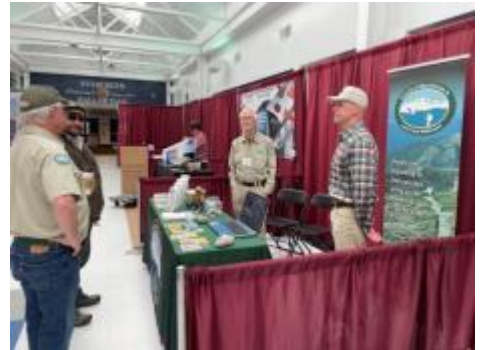
# Outreach and Trailhead Hosting Program

**Gordon Brown**

## FOMELC Participates in the Evergreen Home and Garden Show

The Friends of Mt. Evans and Lost Creek Wildernesses (FOMELC) participated in the Evergreen Home and Garden Show on April 1 and 2. We had a large number of people stop by our booth to discuss wilderness participation. We had many discussions regarding how FOMELC supports the US Forest Service agenda. Several people signed up for the FOMELC Monthly Newsletter.

We spent a lot of time discussing how to become a member, how to volunteer and what areas volunteers would enjoy participating in, whether it be weed eradication, trail maintenance, trail hosting or patrolling. We discussed our Signup.com method of registering to volunteer.



Please look at your summer schedule and find time to volunteer with FOMELC this year. Your participation is always welcome and appreciated. Go to our website: <https://fomelc.org/>

You may also sign up to volunteer for many activities and events at: <https://fomelc.org/volunteer-signup>

Chris Sill, Steve West, Loren Winters and Gordon Brown  
Volunteers at the Home Show Booth

# FOMELC Board Members

**Chairman:** Steve West  
[steve@fomelc.org](mailto:steve@fomelc.org)

**Trail Projects Coordinator:** Wyatt Stanland  
[wyatt@fomelc.org](mailto:wyatt@fomelc.org)

**Secretary:** Vacant

**Membership Coordinator:** Joe O'Leary  
[joe@fomelc.org](mailto:joe@fomelc.org)

**Web Information Tech Lead:** Deb Grass  
[lildeb@fomelc.org](mailto:lildeb@fomelc.org)

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

**Outreach & Trailhead Hosting:** Gordon Brown  
[gordon@fomelc.org](mailto:gordon@fomelc.org)

**Newsletter Assistant Editor:** Loren Winters

**Newsletter/Wilderness Training Program:**  
Dee Lyons [dee@fomelc.org](mailto:dee@fomelc.org)

**Treasurer:** Matt Komos  
[matt@fomelc.org](mailto:matt@fomelc.org)

**Forest Service Liaison:** Ralph Bradt  
[ralph.bradt@usda.gov](mailto:ralph.bradt@usda.gov)

**FOMELC WEBSITE:** <https://fomelc.org/>

## 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! As of April 2023, According to the Forest Service as of April 2023, there are **no restrictions** and all counties in Colorado are in low status.

## 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.



<https://fomelc.org/>

Friends of Mt Evans & Lost Creek Wildernesses  
POBox3431  
Evergreen, CO 80439

**“And Into The Forest, I Go To Lose My Mind And Find My Soul” – John Muir**