

Friends of Mount Evans and Lost Creek Wildernesses



August Photo Contest Winner: **Dahl Winters**

“Bee's eye view of brilliant paintbrush wildflowers near the Captain Mt. Trailhead in mid-July. Mt Evans Wilderness.”

- Dahl

Congratulations!

Check our website for the second place winner.

August Newsletter 2021

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FOMELC Board Members

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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!

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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“By very definition this wilderness is a need. The idea of wilderness as an area without man's influence is man's own concept. Its values are human values. Its preservation is a purpose that arises out of man's own sense of his fundamental needs.” ***– Howard Zahniser***



Note from the Chair – By Peter Vrolijk

A Magnificent Summer

What an incredible year! The late snows and early summer rains have kept streams flowing high and springs seeping where otherwise dry conditions would prevail this late in the summer. Wilderness has experienced this bounty through the lushness of grasses, the abundance of wildflowers, and the vibrancy of the natural landscape.

This bounty has also affected our work this season – invasive plants are out in abundance, and the water running down trails has contributed to trail erosion. We start each season with a general plan of the work to be undertaken, but this plan evolves as the conditions for the season present themselves to us. We treat drainage issues on the Payne Creek trail to help heal problems caused by previous years and to prepare trails to handle water better in coming years. With the abundance of invasive plants developing this year, we work extra hard to treat them with the hopes that this work helps deplete the seed bank developed over years of infestation. If this works, we will see the benefits of this year’s hard work in the coming years.



Meadows above Pedee Creek, Captain Mountain Trail, Mount Evans Wilderness. Extensive work undertaken this season to treat prolific musk thistle developed here.

There is a lot to be proud of in the work completed so far, and in the work that can still be undertaken in the remainder of this season that we hope will yield benefits in the future. Please consider participating in one or more of the remaining projects still to be undertaken before fall sets in.

The lengthening shadows, the ever-shorter days, the anticipation of cooler mornings: these are all aspects that I enjoy in wilderness as the summer wanes and fall approaches, and I hope you have the opportunity to experience these benefits, too.

-Peter

NEW FOMELC MEMBERS FOR 2021

WIN A NEW OSPREY BACKPACK WITH A HYDRATION PACK!

One lucky guy and one lucky gal will win a new Osprey daypack!



Special thank you to Osprey for donating these 2 incredible daypacks!

We are working on an "All Hands Day" for this fall. This will be a short project day, with a BBQ in the afternoon. Throw your name in the hat at this event for a chance to win!

Details Upcoming!



Women's: Osprey Manta/Mira Series 18



Men's: Osprey Manta/Mira Series 36

FROM THE WEED PATCH

By Alan Rockwood

Since drafting the last newsletter, we have been through the peak weed season. Our volunteers have conducted 7 treatment projects in this month contributing hundreds of hours for wilderness preservation and restoration. The abundantly wet spring and early summer has stimulated the growth of all vegetation, but the more aggressive invasive plants have taken advantage of the favorable conditions. Species like musk thistle and yellow toadflax are flowering more than I've ever seen. With all of the projects, there is much to write about, but I want to highlight the experience from one – our volunteers call it “Magic Valley”. It is on Bear Creek southeast of Beaver Meadows.

In 2020 while treating a Canada thistle infestation far removed from any system trail, Peter Vroljik sought to probe the perimeters of the site. He found a dense 1/4-acre infestation of Canada thistle in somewhat extreme terrain.



Challenging area to treat. Volunteers- D. Black, C. Sills, A. Rockwood and D. Lyons, Photo by P. Vroljik



Very dense infestation in 2020

The volunteers took the extra time to treat it immediately. Twelve months later, four volunteers returned to work on the primary area and satellite infestation. Thank you to Gordon Brown, Keith Kuhlman and Loren Winters for helping me in this project! What we found in the satellite area were **four plants** less than 5 inches high most likely seedlings rather than growth from the old root system. That kind of success in treating Canada thistle is rare. The before and after story is shown in these photographs. We still will have to monitor the site for years.

It is impossible to praise enough the efforts of the FOMELC member/volunteers that regularly turn out for the weed program. What they do for this abstract concept of wilderness is amazing! They see invasive species as antithetical to wilderness and know these non-native plants are a very real assault on biodiversity.

Scene in 2021. Volunteer A. Rockwood, Photo by L. Winters



Next Invasive Weed Projects, Watch your Email:

September 6 – Captain Mountain, Mt Evans Wilderness

September 13 Wigwam, Lost Creek Wilderness

Payne Creek Adopt-A-Trail Project

By Wyatt Stanland (Trail Crew Leader)

The Friends of Mount Evans and Lost Creek have adopted the Payne Creek Trail to perform trail maintenance for the 2021 project season. The work moved further up the Payne Creek Trail on July 17th with 8 volunteers working to construct needed water drainage structures and remove downed trees from the trail. Some trail folks commonly refer to this type of work as “trail plumbing.” Working until the afternoon in the cool, shaded forest, volunteers constructed 17 drainage dips and removed 6 downed trees from across the trail.



We had an excellent turn out for the July trail project. A huge thank you to Robert and Annie Legrand, Greg Angstadt, Amelie Moutoux, Dee Lyons, Ralph Bradt, and Peter Vrolijk for coming out to volunteer! The Payne Creek Trail is looking much better and we are looking forward to the next work day as we move closer to the aspen saddle at the top! No experience is necessary, and all tools will be provided with hands-on instructions. Join the fun and make a difference!

We are making great progress and need more volunteers.



Upcoming Last Trail Project Workday:

- **September 12**



To register contact: wyatt@fomelc.org

Free trail crew shirt for participating

Photos by Dee Lyons and Greg Angstadt

Where: Payne Creek Trailhead, County Rd 64 Bailey.

Directions: US Hwy285 South to Bailey, Turn left onto CR64. **We currently have another access which cuts off 3 hiking miles to the work site. Registered volunteers will be given directions to that access point. Meeting at 8 AM.**

Work Day Plan: Trail work 8-12:30, lunch 12:30-1:00, trail work 1:00-3:00

What to Bring/Wear: Long pants, sturdy hiking boots, gloves, long sleeve shirt, lunch, 2 quarts water. Be prepared for all kinds of weather conditions (raincoat, jacket)

FOMELC Training Program Now Online!

For New and Returning Volunteers

Dee Lyons

The FOMELC Wilderness Training Program

A virtual online program for our new and returning volunteers

Many people come to this training with an appreciation for wilderness and a desire to help preserve it, and we hope this training provides you with a better opportunity to launch your involvement and contribution to the mission of sustaining wilderness character.

A Wilderness patrol with a FOMELC mentor is a part of the program.

The training is designed to be accomplished at your own pace.

Are you registered?

Contact: dee@fomelc.org

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!**

Trail Patrols

Survey123 Reports are coming in! Check the interactive map on our website.

Keep them coming!

[FOMELC Interactive Map](#)

Trailhead Hosts Needed

Volunteers are needed to participate as Trailhead Hosts at various Mt Evans and Lost Creek Wilderness trailheads. A table, FOMELC banner and information materials are provided. Volunteers will answer questions from hikers and provide information regarding Leave No Trace. This is a great way to interact with the public and let them know that FOMELC is a volunteer organization in partnership with the Forest Service in maintaining trails, eradicating weeds, wilderness education and many other supporting tasks.

There is no hiking involved, so for those volunteers who would be interested in sitting at a trailhead making public contacts, this is perfect. **Contact:** steve@fomelc.org

THANK YOU!!!

I wanted to say a **special Thank You** to my assistant editors: **John Kruse, Dahl Winters and Loren Winters**. They are instrumental in bringing a great newsletter to you every month. Their editing skills have been greatly appreciated!

- Dee Lyons

FOMELC PARTICIPATES IN BAILEY DAY 2021 AND THE CONIFER ELEVATION CELEBRATION.

By Gordon Brown: Marketing/Education Team Lead

FOMELC participated in these two local mountain community outdoor events to raise our visibility, educate people on the Mount Evans and Lost Creek Wilderness areas and grow membership. We had successful results at both events by having 27 potential members sign up for our newsletter at Bailey Day and 40 potential members at the Conifer Elevation Celebration, and we received \$135.00 in donations from both events. We are excited to have this large number of potential volunteers.



To potential volunteers: Whether you have the time to volunteer for one or several of our events for invasive weed eradication, trail maintenance, trail hosting or trail patrols, FOMELC welcomes your participation.

As you read our newsletter think of possible events you might be interested in and come out and give it a try. Our events are published every month in our newsletter and you can find events on our website at <https://fomelc.org/>

Please make your commitment today to participate in a FOMELC project.

The History of the Original Mount Evans Trail

By Ralph Bradt

There have been three official trails to the summit of Mount Evans. The most recent is the 2½ mile Mount Evans Ridge trail, from Summit Lake to the top, built in the mid 2000's by the Colorado Fourteeners Initiative. The Mount Evans Summit trail is the short 0.3 mile trail from the parking lot at the end of the road to the top of the peak, undoubtedly the busiest trail on the mountain.

The third trail, the original one, no longer exists as it was, although parts of it are incorporated into today's trail system. On a 1938 trail plan, the trail length is given as 10 miles. As with most of the trails in the upper Bear Creek Basin trails, it was constructed around 1917 as part of an agreement between the Forest Service and the city of Denver. In exchange for the city dropping its support of making the Mount Evans area a National Park (very unpopular with the Forest Service), the Forest Service agreed to construct recreational trails and facilities in the Bear Creek basin.

The trail began at the Bear Creek Ranger Station, the site of which is ¼ mile down the Lost Creek trail from the trailhead, and travelled west to Bear Creek, crossing private land at Camp Rock (not today's campground, but a 1905 homestead downstream), then continuing west via an uncertain route to the junction with the Beartrack Lakes trail at today's Camp Rock Campground.



1922 Bear Creek Ranger Station



1917 Mount Evans from Camp Rock

From there, the trails followed today's Beaver Meadows and Cub Creek trails, past the shelters constructed in Beaver Meadows, to the Mount Evans Resthouse. The Resthouse was a cabin built by the Forest Service and furnished by the Colorado Mountain Club for public use. It burned in 1968, leaving only a chimney. The trail from a mile west of the Camp Rock Campground to Beaver Meadows was widened in 1962 by bulldozers fighting the 1050 acre Resthouse fire.



1917 Beaver Meadows shelters



1924 Mount Evans Resthouse

Turning south at the Resthouse, the trail followed today's Cub Creek Trail to a point just south of the bridge over Bear Creek, then turned west, following Bear Creek, but on the higher ground above Resthouse Meadows. After ¼ mile the trail joined what is now the Summit flats trail and climbed south onto the ridge between Bear and Tumbling Creeks. Just north of the Tumbling Creek cirque, the trail left what is now today's Summit Flats trail and continued climbing in a series of long switchbacks onto the southeast shoulder, then on to the summit.



1921 Mount Evans from the trail at timberline



1925 Visitors on the trail on the shoulder of Mount Evans

The section along the south side of Resthouse Meadows was badly burned in the 1962 Resthouse Fire. Following the fire, and with most visitors going to the Mount Evans summit by the highway, the burned section of the trail was rerouted around the west and north sides of Resthouse Meadows, and the upper section rerouted northwesterly across Summit Flats toward Summit Lake, today's Summit Flats Trail. The final climb to the summit was abandoned.

2021 Fire Restrictions

Know before you go! Colorado Fire Bans:
<http://www.coemergency.com/p/fire-bans-danger.html>

“Only You Can Prevent Wild Fires!”

