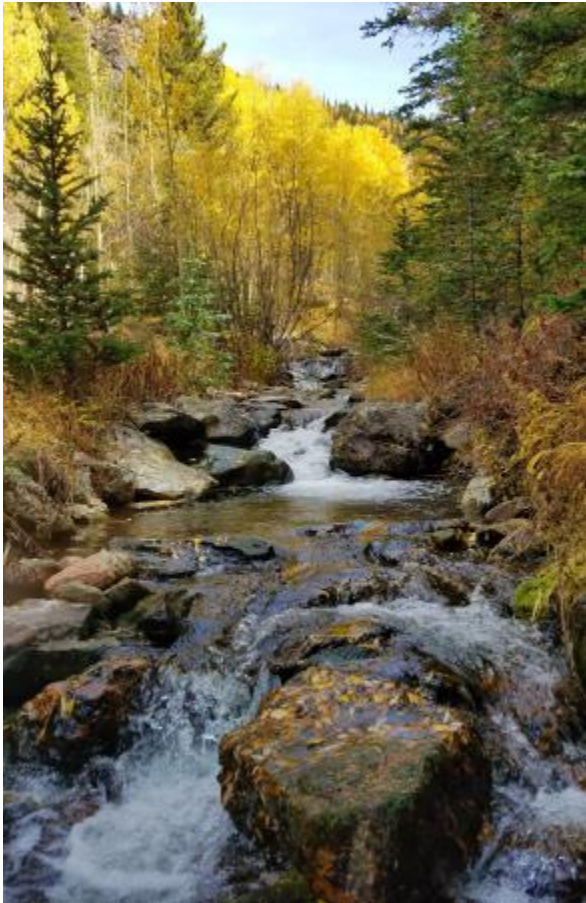


# *Friends of Mount Evans and Lost Creek Wildernesses*



October Photo Contest Winner: [Deb Grass](#)

[Three Mile Creek, Mt. Evans Wilderness](#)  
“Last hike of the season to see the fall colors.”

Congratulations!

## *October Newsletter 2021*

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## *Note from the Chair – By Peter Vrolijk*

### *It's a Wrap*

The summer field season is done, as the photo of Summit Lake and Mount Evans suggests. This stark landscape is already becoming whiter, and my mind shifts to outings at lower elevations.

We started this season uncertain how the pandemic would carry over to our work this year – would we face similar limitations as last year? Fortunately, the arrival of vaccines saved us, and many of our activities returned to normal.

The late, wet winter continuing into spring created challenges for wilderness stewardship. There was abundant evidence of water eroding trails. As Wyatt Stanland describes, our trail work on the Payne Creek Trail accomplished a lot to heal existing erosion and prevent it in the future.



Alan Rockwood describes a full season of treatment for invasive plants. The wet conditions seem to have stimulated seeds stored in the soil, and the lush forests and meadows were in some areas overcome by invasive plants occurring in abundances not seen for years. The positive side of this is that native species, like Parry's thistle, also thrived, making for joyful outings into the wilderness.

Trail patrols helped document the state of wilderness, and an exceptional effort was made by some volunteers to collect detailed surveys of campsites. This information remains invaluable for identifying the biggest problems to address in coming years.

The pandemic continued to bring visitors to wilderness in abundance, and it continues to suffer from such heavy usage. Trail head host outings to the Goose Creek, Wigwam, and Abyss Lake trailheads offered the opportunity to educate visitors to the special environment of wilderness. At Abyss Lake trailhead at the prime of aspen colors, almost 800 visitors were counted heading up the trail in just over 6 hours! Most visitors were discovering the trail for the first time.

A substantial effort was made to convert our classroom training into online modules, making this information available year-round to new members. This effort laid a strong foundation for continuing to improve our training curriculum.

A full year, indeed.

Planning has already started for next year's program, and more will be written about the challenges we will face. In the meantime, the sunny, crisp days of fall are a joyful respite from the hard work of this past year.

- Peter

# Support Wilderness Funding

Wilderness benefits most from the hours FOMELC volunteers contribute to projects.



As you think about potential end-of-year charitable contributions, please consider FOMELC in your planning! As a 100% volunteer organization that is self-funded through grants and donations, any financial contribution makes a significant impact. We greatly appreciate all of your efforts and the time and energy you put into making FOMELC a success!

*Please consider a charitable donation to help keep the program running.*

*Donate*

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## *The FOMELC Wilderness Training Program*

*A virtual online program for FOMELC volunteers*

**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](mailto:dee@fomelc.org)

# November is FOMELC's Month at the Platte Canyon Community Partnership (Resale Boutique) PCCP

Gordon Brown – Marketing & Education

FOMELC has been given a grant from PCCP, the cute, little, totally volunteer run resale boutique in Bailey. In return for being rewarded this grant, FOMELC has been asked to volunteer our time and talent to help them help others.

During the month of November **FOMELC Volunteers are needed** for several opportunities:

- At least once a week, you could make an ARC Thrift Store (in the Denver area) run to recycle things the boutique cannot use. You'd need a SUV or truck.
- You could volunteer in the shop 2-4 hours. There's always a friendly face to make your stay fun.
- On **Sunday, Oct. 31**, you could volunteer a couple hours to haul out tubs of winter and Christmas items so the store can change over from fall décor.
- On **Monday, Nov. 1**, you could volunteer a couple hours to get the store ready for winter and the holidays.
- On **Nov. 27<sup>th</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup>** (depending on weather) you could volunteer to hang lights on the outside of the building and decorate a live tree. There is a winery and brewery across the street from the boutique in case you're interested.
- Make an effort to stop by to shop and be sure to let them know you are a member with FOMELC. The boutique is located right off route 285 in the center of Bailey. Their address is:  
**60629 U.S.Highway 285.**



Please contact Gordon Brown at [gordon@fomelc.org](mailto:gordon@fomelc.org) if you would like to volunteer some of your time at this fun shop.

# ***FROM THE WEED PATCH***

***Alan Rockwood***

Field projects are finished. “Leaf peepers” are staying home. Ski areas are opening. Now is the time for filing treatment records with the US Forest Service and completing final reports to our grantors. Usually at the end of the season, we write retrospectives on what we have accomplished. That’s a worthy task and I will share my thoughts. Unfortunately, there will always be “job security” for the noxious weed program volunteers! However, there are also many reasons to be upbeat about how much our volunteers are contributing toward the protection and enhancement of “wilderness character”.

This year presented many challenges. The COVID pandemic was still with us, limiting participation at times. We faced COVID quarantines affecting our schedule twice. That is significant when so many projects must be scheduled in an 8-week period. The weather conditions were ideal for species like musk thistle and yellow toadflax. We have learned a lot from the culmination of our experiences in recent years, and we are developing new strategies for treatments. For a variety of reasons volunteer participation in the early projects was limited. However, by the end of the season, we could not accommodate all of the members that wanted to join the team. That is a mixed blessing. We never want to turn away volunteers. So, we must embrace the opportunity to recruit and train new crew leaders to get more “boots-on-the-ground”. Finishing strong with volunteer participation is a very good omen for 2022.

FOMELC’s noxious weed program has built credibility within the public land community. Few volunteer stewardship organizations provide an “integrated weed management program” – chemical and manual treatments, early detection/rapid response, education and prevention. We have strong support from the District Offices of the Arapaho and the Pike National Forests. FOMELC volunteers work shoulder to shoulder with the staff from the US Forest Service and Colorado Parks and Wildlife. We are in preliminary discussions with Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado to partner on weed projects. This can be a “game changer” for certain types of infestation. Perhaps we can in turn transfer some of our knowledge to other groups. Going forward with partnerships will become a model for more effective stewardship of public lands. We are pursuing all possibilities.

Speaking of partnerships, I want to acknowledge the invaluable help from Front Range Backcountry Horsemen, especially Dan Lincoln. Their support is essential to our noxious weed program and trail projects, as well.

Organizational strength is great but we can succeed only with the volunteer base to do the work in the field. In closing, I want to recognize and express my most sincere gratitude to the 2021 noxious weed program volunteers:

***Debbie Black,  
Molly Conneen  
Deb Grass  
John Kruse  
Dee Lyons  
Joe O’Leary  
Chris Sill  
Nancy Woodson***

***Ralph Bradt,  
Mary Franquemont  
Guy and Kay Hoisington  
Keith Kuhlman  
Amelie Moutoux  
Candice Rockwood  
Peter Vroljik  
June Zapata***

***Gordon Brown  
Theresa and Paul Gilliland  
Bill Klink,  
Annie and Paul Legrande  
Janice Mullins  
Jim Shelton  
Dahl and Loren Winters  
*(I hope I didn’t miss anyone)****

**You are awesome!** *Together we are making a difference, just ask an “old timer”.*

***Final noxious weed project, Beartrack Lakes Orange Hawkweed, Canada Thistle  
September 4, 2021***

*Pictures provided by Annie Legrande, Loren Winters and Dee Lyons*



***Drop off point, Mt Evans Road***



***Off they go!***



***A moment to ponder***



***Overlooking Beartrack Lakes***



***Last tundra hurrah before heading down to lakes***



*Lean mean Hawkweed killin machine!*



*Hawkweed*



*The sign of fall*



# SEPTEMBER PAYNE CREEK FINAL ADOPT-A-TRAIL PROJECT

Wyatt Stanland

Pictures by Gordon Brown and Dee Lyons

The Friends of Mount Evans and Lost Creek adopted the Payne Creek Trail to perform trail maintenance for the 2021 project season. The final September work day saw the work move further up the Payne Creek Trail with a full wilderness cap of 15 volunteers, our largest project to date!

It was fantastic to see both new and returning volunteers working together in September to construct 21 needed water drainage structures. The returning volunteers, some of whom were new only a few months ago, already had knowledge to pass on to the new folks. It is always rewarding to see new volunteers gain confidence and skills throughout the day!







A huge thank you to Robert and Annie Legrand, Elizabeth Motley, Greg Angstadt, Amelie Moutoux, Joseph O'Leary, Bob Hunter, Theresa and Paul Gilliland, Dave Kraemer, Chris Garner, Gordon Brown, Dee Lyons, and Peter Vrolijk for coming out to volunteer in September!

We also owe a debt of gratitude to the Backcountry Horsemen, who cleared many downed trees at the beginning of the year to make our trail projects easier. Dan Shier and Dan Lincoln also graciously hauled our tools up to the higher worksites to be cached for the August and September projects, which greatly reduced our fatigue on the hike up. Thank you!

I would also like to recognize the full body of work that we completed throughout this year on the Payne Creek Trail, as well as all of the dedicated volunteers who made this work possible.

Thank you to:

Robert and Annie Legrand  
Greg Angstadt  
Amelie Moutoux  
Chris Sill  
Gordon Brown  
Elizabeth Motley  
Joseph O'Leary  
Bob Hunter  
Theresa and Paul Gilliland  
Dave Kraemer  
Chris Garner  
Kay and Guy Hoisington  
David Lehr



In summary, in over five projects from May through September, we completed a total of 27 drain dips, 37 water bars, 17 check steps, cleared six downed trees off the trail, repaired a washed out creek crossing, repaired four sections of braided trail, and reconstructed two extended drain sections that were filled with debris.

For your enjoyment, on the next two pages, Ralph Bradt has provided a history article regarding the Payne Creek Trail.

# LOST CREEK WILDERNESS HISTORY

## PAYNE CREEK TRAIL - RALPH BRADT

### Early History

Little if anything has yet been found of the history of the area before the late 1800s, aside from occasional arrowheads and a broken spear point of petrified wood found up the now closed road on the west fork of Payne Creek.

### Early Logging History

Payne Gulch was named for Jim Payne, a logger who had a sawmill (known as a millset) two miles up Payne Creek from Glen Isle in 1881 and 1882. The daily capacity of the mill was ten thousand board feet. Concrete remains of the foundation of his millset can still be found at the south end of a small meadow.

Jim Payne was not the only one who cut in Payne Gulch. In the late 1800s and early 1900s there were logging operations up and down the Platte Canyon, cutting railroad ties, mine timbers, lumber for construction, and pulpwood for paper mills. A man named Hilderbrand had a mill with a capacity of 6,000 board feet per day near the site of Glen Isle for a year and a half in 1883-1884. A John Travins is said to have had a mill high in the gulch near the divide between Craig Meadows and Payne Gulch in 1882. Over on Craig Creek, W. H. Clay had a millset in 1883-1884 with a daily capacity of 8000 board feet. A man named Burdette also had a millset on Craig Creek in 1894.

About six tenths of a mile up an old, steep logging road on the west fork of Payne Creek in the Wilderness lie the fading remains of an old mill, quite possibly John Travins' mill. From the numerous hole-in-cap cans and the remains of old skidding chutes on the hillside above constructed of logs, it seems reasonable to assume it existed sometime in the late 1800s-early 1900s and had a relatively large capacity. A visit to the site in the late 1990s by Al Kane, forest archaeologist, turned up an old, child's toy, indicating it probably was a family operation.

### The Payne Gulch fire

On May 30, 1927, the 135-acre Payne Gulch fire began a half mile beyond the present end of the Payne Gulch road. The fire was determined to have begun at a campsite. The campers put out their campfire, but failed to notice fire was travelling along the underside of a log leading away from the fire into the timber. The fire apparently drew a great deal of interest at the time. In October of that year, a group of dignitaries from the U.S. and state forest services and the city of Denver visited the site. A study of the site was begun and a sign was erected at the site marking the forest study plot. The study was dropped in 1955.



*1936 photo of the Payne Gulch Burn*



Inspecting the fire's origin



Sign marking the site of the burn

### 1933 CCC Camp F-10-C

In the meadow (AKA Mowing Machine meadow) west of the Payne Gulch/Brookside trail junction, there is a concrete slab marking the site of Civilian Conservation Corps Camp F-10-C (Forest Service-Camp 10- Colorado). The camp was established in 1933, the first year of the CCC. It was occupied by Company 1814 in the spring of 1933. The men of the Bailey camp thinned 3,174 acres of timber, the best showing of any CCC company in the state. They also put in over 300 man-hours fighting a 20-acre late season fire to the north at the head of Deer Creek. A crew from the camp also did erosion control work on Denver Mountain Parks property just south of Evergreen.

Unfortunately, information on the camp is limited, and it lasted only one season and was abandoned November 30 of that year, with Company 1814 being sent to Texas. It is possible the site was used as a side camp on occasion in later years, but it was never again a formal camp.



# FOMELC Board Members

**Chairman:** Peter Vrolijk  
[peter@fomelc.org](mailto:peter@fomelc.org)

**Secretary:** John Kruse  
[john@fomelc.org](mailto:john@fomelc.org)

**Membership:** Vacant

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

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

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

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

**Membership Coordinator:** **Vacant – Contact Peter to volunteer**

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

**Marketing/Education Team Lead:** Gordon Brown  
[gordon@fomelc.org](mailto:gordon@fomelc.org)

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

**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  
PO Box 3431  
Evergreen, CO 80439*

<https://fomelc.org/>



**"A wilderness in contrast with those areas where man and his works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain." Wilderness Act, 1964**