



# Wild Connections

FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO THE PRAIRIES

Protecting and restoring wildlands in the Arkansas and South Platte watersheds...



**Wild Connections News**

**August 2018**

Hi {FIRST\_NAME} to all our friends},

We got some great public events coming up the next couple of months. Join Wild Connections and get out on your public lands!

Also see below for info about the 2018 Colorado Wilderness Act, introduced just last week!

## Upcoming Outings and Volunteer Projects...

### Beaver Creek Wilderness Study Area Day Hike

**Saturday, August 11, 2018**

**9:00 AM - 3:00 PM (Trailhead to Trailhead times)**



Beaver Creek Roadless Area, comprising the Beaver Creek Wilderness Study Area and adjoining roadless portions of Pike National Forest, has long been recognized as an area with unsurpassed wilderness potential and is one of the areas proposed for wilderness in the citizen-promoted Colorado Wilderness Act.

It is also an area of interest of to Wild Connections in its planned updating of the Wild Connections Conservation Plan (available at <http://www.wildconnections.org/conservation/wccpconservationplan.html>).

This moderately strenuous off-trail hike, visiting the northern portion of this potential wilderness south of Gold Camp Road, will be approximately five miles with 1,200 feet elevation change. Participants will have the opportunity to hike through genuinely trackless wilderness and see the impacts of a recent road closure on its wilderness

characteristics.

Bring lunch, water, raingear, clothing suitable for the weather conditions, and footgear suitable for off-trail, primarily downhill hiking.

This trip is jointly sponsored by Wild Connections, Pikes Peak Sierra Club Group, and Central Colorado Wilderness Coalition. For more information and to register, contact Jim Lockhart 719-385-0045 or [jlock@datawest.net](mailto:jlock@datawest.net) by 5:00 pm, Friday, August 10.

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## USFS South Park Alpine Restoration Projects

**Part 1: August 17-19, 2018**

**Part 2: September 08-09, 2018**

Join us for a weekend or one-day event in spectacular high country at three sites within 10 miles northwest and southwest of Fairplay.

Seeking lots of volunteers for these project dates! Bring your friends!

The headwaters of North Tarryall Creek, Sheep Creek and Beaver Creek have been impacted by illegal motorized activity and social trail development, which has damaged the alpine habitat and sent sediment into the watershed. After equipment preps the sites, volunteers will seed and mulch the area.

We'll be camping in a beautiful location with views across a meadow toward the continental divide.

These are the first and second projects in a series extending through 2019. Wild Connections is pleased to be working with long-time partners, USFS South Park Ranger District, Mosquito Range Heritage Initiative (MRHI) and Wildlands Restoration Volunteers (WRV).

### Registration is Open!

To register, or for more info, please go to WRV's page here:

[South Park Alpine Restoration Project Pt 1](#)

[South Park Alpine Restoration Project Pt 2](#)

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## USFS Pawnee Montane Skipper Butterfly Surveys

### Pike National Forest, South Platte Ranger District

**August 20-31, 2018**



The *Liatris* flowers are starting to bloom and the USFS is preparing for their annual population monitoring effort for the Pawnee montane skipper butterfly in the Upper South Platte Watershed.

Volunteers are needed to assist in monitoring the threatened butterfly subspecies *Hesperia leonardus montana*, the Pawnee montane skipper. Monitoring will consist of using binoculars to observe and record number and gender of skipper butterflies, as well as information about nearby host plants and trees. Volunteers should be 18+ years of age and physically fit enough to hike off-trail in steep country for a whole day.

Volunteers will meet in Trumbull, CO. Surveying will take place on the Pike National Forest, South Platte Ranger District, Jefferson and Douglas counties, Upper South Platte River watershed from Cheesman Reservoir area to North Fork confluence.

This project will most likely take place from August 20-3, with additional potential dates of September 3-7, 2018. This is subject to change based on observed skipper flight and daily weather conditions.

To sign up for this project or ask questions, please contact Mikele Painter, biologist with the Pike National Forest, at 303-275-5614 or at [mpainter@fs.fed.us](mailto:mpainter@fs.fed.us).

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## Wild Connections Conservation Plan Webinar

**September 17, 2018**

**Time: TBD**

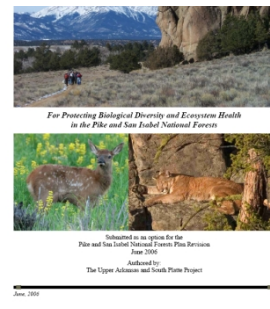


Wild Connections is hosting an upcoming webinar on revising our 2006 [Wild Connections' Conservation Plan \(WCCP\)](#).

This plan guides our recommendations to the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land managers on conserving wildlife habitat and quiet use recreation in the central Colorado mountains.

Upcoming WCCP revisions will include re-inventorying select USFS roadless areas, updating BLM inventories and decisions, and adding a climate change analysis to identify climate refugia where flora and fauna can persist with a changing climate.

This webinar is scheduled for September 17, 2018 at a time to be announced. If interested, or for more info, please contact Karl Ford at [earthford@aol.com](mailto:earthford@aol.com).



## 2018 Colorado Wilderness Act

Congresswoman Diana DeGette introduced the [2018 Colorado Wilderness Act](#) last week at the Outdoor Retailer Show in Denver, CO.

The Colorado Wilderness Act began as the Citizen's Wilderness Plan, developed by a group of concerned citizens and organizations, including Wild Connections, who inventoried federal lands throughout the state to identify pristine lands that met the criteria for Wilderness designation. The proposal was modified after discussion and was presented to Congresswoman Diana DeGette. She agreed those lands required protection and introduced a bill to designate the areas as Wilderness, which is the strongest level of land protection in the country. The need for this protection has only grown as more people have moved or traveled to Colorado to enjoy the natural splendor here.

Congresswoman DeGette has introduced the Colorado Wilderness Act in every Congress since 1999. The new bill reflects the efforts of grassroots activists to update the inventory of Colorado's lands with wilderness characteristics. It aims to protect lower-lying BLM lands that have historically been less of a focus than the higher, alpine-zone areas for which Colorado is more well-known.

The 2018 Colorado Wilderness Act designates 31 areas in Colorado as Wilderness and two areas as Potential Wilderness, totaling more than 740,000 acres! Many of the proposed areas are mid-elevation ecosystems that are underrepresented in currently designated Colorado Wilderness, and they provide valuable habitat for a staggering variety of plants and wildlife. These areas include stunning red cliffs, winding river-ways, and steep, rocky ridges.

The proposed wilderness areas in our region include Browns Canyon in the Upper Arkansas River Valley, Badger Creek, Table Mountain, McIntyre Hills, and Grape Creek in the Arkansas River Canyonlands, and Beaver Creek, located between Canon City and Colorado Springs.

For more information and the 2018 Colorado Wilderness Act Map, please visit Diana DeGette's webpage at: <https://degette.house.gov/legislative-issues/protecting-colorado-s-wilderness>



*Jim, Misi, John, Kristin, Alison, Claude, Deb, Karl and John*  
- All of us at Wild Connections

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Thanks for the photos! Credit from top to bottom:  
John Sztukowski (header), John Sztukowski, Misi Ballard, Wild Connections,  
Wild Connections WCCP Cover, Table Mountain: Kate Spinelli, Badger Creek: Kate Spinelli

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