



# Wild Connections

FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO THE PRAIRIES

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

**E-News    May, 2019**

May 2019 is here, and it is chock-full of opportunities to get involved with your local public lands, including the Colorado Wilderness Conference and Colorado Public Lands Day! Below are this month's headlines, followed by the full stories.

- Park County Commissioners commit to protecting Wildcat Canyon!
- Browns Canyon National Monument Planning
- Upcoming Hikes and Events...
  - **5/4** Salida's "Our Mother Earth Festival"
  - **5/5** Hole in the Rocks Hike
  - **5/10 - 5/11** Colorado Wilderness Conference
  - **5/12 - 5/18** Colorado Endangered Species Week
  - **5/18** Colorado Public Lands Day: Falls Gulch & Mountain Hike
  - **5/30 Food, Inc** showing by Films for a Green Planet
  - **6/18 - 6/19** Refrigerator Gulch Climate Education Backpack
- Summer South Park Alpine Restoration Projects - Register Now!

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## **Park County Commissioners Commit to Protecting Wildcat Canyon!**



In a recent press release, Park County Commissioners committed to protecting Wildcat Canyon in South Park, deferring to the USFS, and specifically the South Park Ranger District's expertise, to not obtain easements that would re-open Wildcat Canyon, Hackett Gulch, Longwater Gulch, and Corral Creek to motorized use.

See Park County's full April 16, 2019 press release [here](#).

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## Browns Canyon National Monument Planning



On April 1, BLM and USFS released their [Planning Criteria Report](#) with Preliminary Alternatives and Basis for Analysis as part of the Browns Canyon National Monument Resource Management Plan (RMP). The scoping period is expected to officially kick off on May 8, with a 30-day public comment period. The BLM and USFS have only one year to complete the plan, with the approved RMP expected May or June 2020. The full Browns Canyon National Monument RMP timeline can be found [here](#).

Wild Connections has been part of a greater working group of stakeholders that is developing recommendations for the Browns Canyon National Monument Resource Management Plan. For more info and/or to provide input, contact John Sztukowski at [john@wildconnections.org](mailto:john@wildconnections.org).

Wild Connections will also have more info and talking points on [our website](#) as this plan gets underway.

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## Upcoming Hikes and Events

**Salida "Our Mother Earth Festival"**  
**Saturday, May 4, 2019 - 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM**

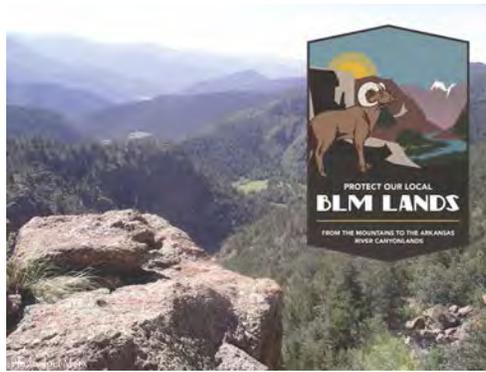


Find Wild Connections booth this Saturday at Salida's annual "Our Mother Earth Festival" in Salida's Riverside Park.

The third annual Parade for the Species, hosted by 350 Central Colorado, kicks off the day at 10:00 AM. The festival also features info and educational booths for all ages, music, and a short speech by Joe Salazar, former Colorado house representative and now executive director of Colorado Rising.

Be sure to stop by Wild Connections' booth and learn the latest about our public lands!

**Hole in the Rocks Hike, A BLM Wildlands Outing to Upper Red Canyon  
Sunday, May 5, 2019 - 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM (Trailhead to Trailhead Time)**



The Bureau of Land Management has a relatively unknown and unused series of trails in the Booger Red roadless area southwest of Cripple Creek. This area was recently inventoried by Wild Connections volunteers and found to have wilderness characteristics worthy of protection. The BLM followed-up with another inventory of their own, and also found lands with wilderness characteristics for this area, Upper Red Canyon.

Hike participants will have the opportunity to visit this area and also to learn how citizens can get involved to protect wild areas in the BLM's recently-begun process of updating its regional resource management plan. This moderately strenuous all-day hike, co-sponsored by Pikes Peak Group Sierra Club, Wild Connections, and Central Colorado Wilderness Coalition, will cover about nine miles with 800 feet elevation change.

Participants should bring lunch, plenty of water, footgear suitable for hiking on rough trails, and clothing suitable to the weather conditions, including raingear. We will meet at 7:30 in Colorado Springs to carpool to the trailhead.

For more information or to sign up, contact Jim Lockhart at 719-385-0045 or [jlock@datawest.net](mailto:jlock@datawest.net).

**2019 Colorado Wilderness Conference  
Friday, May 10 - Saturday, May 11 - Buena Vista, CO**



The 2019 Colorado Wilderness Conference is coming soon!

Register today at [www.cmc.org/wild](http://www.cmc.org/wild).

Join the conservation community in Buena Vista on May 10-11 to discuss Colorado's most pressing Wilderness topics, including new designations, current management strategies, and grassroots organizing skills.

Preliminary agenda topics include the CORE Act, citizen science to help protect bighorn sheep, sportsman's perspective, a wilderness manager panel, and much more!

There are also optional field trips on Sunday, May 12: A Camp Hale/CORE Act Areas trip or a Browns Canyon National Monument hike, led by John Stansfield.

**Colorado Endangered Species Week, hosted by Rocky Mountain Wild  
May 12 - 18, 2019**



Rocky Mountain Wild will host the third Colorado Endangered Species Week, May 12-18, 2019, with the National Endangered Species Day occurring on May 17.

During this week, Rocky Mountain Wild and partners will be organizing speakers, fundraisers, and other activities along the Front Range, with major events occurring in Boulder and Denver.

For more information and schedule of events, please go to: <https://rockymountainwild.org/cesw>.

**Falls Gulch & Falls Gulch Mountain Hike, A BLM Wildlands Outing  
Colorado Public Lands Day!  
Saturday, May 18, 2019 - 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM (Trailhead to Trailhead Time)**



Celebrate Colorado Public Lands Day with Wild Connections!

This covers two short BLM public lands hikes while visiting Falls Gulch and its namesake mountain above the Arkansas River, north of Cotopaxi.

The two hikes will total four miles with 750 feet of elevation gain. Falls Gulch, an interesting valley with multiple springs, plant and wildlife diversity, and a small water fall at its terminus, is designated as a Colorado Natural Heritage Program Proposed Conservation Area and as BLM Lands with Wilderness Characteristics. Falls Gulch Mountain, 9,042 feet high, looms over the gulch with spectacular views of much of southern Colorado.

Bring sturdy, water resistant boots, clothes appropriate for the weather forecast, water, lunch, and usual day-hike essentials. This trip is sponsored by Pikes Peak Group Sierra Club, Wild Connections, and Central Colorado Wilderness Coalition. Maximum 15 participants. Sorry, no dogs on this one. A Colorado Springs carpool will depart at 7:30 AM.

For more trip and carpool information and required registration, contact John Stansfield, 303-660-5849 or email [jorcstan@juno.com](mailto:jorcstan@juno.com) by 5:00 PM, Friday, May 17. Note: This hike is posted on multiple forums, however space is limited. To officially register, you must contact the hike leader, John Stansfield, at the above contact info.

**Films For a Green Planet Film Series: March - July, 2019**  
**Last Thursday of the Month - Show Time: 7:00 PM**  
**Cañon City, CO: United Presbyterian Church, 701 Macon Ave**



**This month: Thursday, May 30:**

***Food, Inc***, an investigation of the modern American food industry. This Oscar-nominated documentary exposes a system rife with corruptive, secretive and abusive practices, and whose products contribute to the rising epidemic of obesity and all the deadly diseases that result

Wild Connections is proud to be a sponsor of Films for a Green Planet, a Cañon City community environmental film series. Some movies may be prefaced or followed by a guest speaker and brief discussion.

These films are free and open to the public!

See [www.wildconnections.org/events](http://www.wildconnections.org/events) for the complete list of films and descriptions for this film series.

**Refrigerator Gulch Climate Education Backpack, A Pike National Forest Wilderness Outing  
Tuesday, June 18 - Wednesday, June 19, 2019, Meeting 9:00 AM from Wigwam Trailhead**



Join Wild Connections for our first ever climate backpack in Refrigerator Gulch in the Lost Creek Wilderness. This outing is located in the high elevation of Pike National Forest, southwest of Deckers, just over an hour from southwest Denver or Colorado Springs.

This moderately strenuous overnight backpack hike will cover approximately 15 miles, with 2000 feet of elevation gain. This hike begins at the Wigwam Creek trailhead and ascends Wigwam Creek and a tributary drainage, then descends 1000 feet to Refrigerator Gulch where we will camp for the night. Day 2 we will return the way we came. Prior backpacking experience is required. No heavy packs >30 lbs (not counting water) please as we will move at a moderate pace.

We will also enjoy great views of Wigwam Park and Peak and of the amazing jumbled topography of the Lost Creek Wilderness. As a special feature of this hike, we will study how the heavily dissected topography of this area lends itself to cold air pools that scientists are identifying as wildlife and native plant refugia and climate corridors. We will record microclimate temperature changes in differing topography locations and photograph the corresponding plant life on a citizen science app for smartphones. On day 2, we will return, taking additional measurements. Cold air pools serve not only as areas where plants and animals may persist in a warmer, drier climate, but also as climate corridors where they may migrate northerly or altitudinally.

Participants should bring 2 lunches, one dinner, one breakfast and snacks, the ten essentials including water treatment, lightweight camping gear and extra clothing, comfortable hiking footwear and raingear.

This hike is co-sponsored by Wild Connections and the Colorado Mountain Club. For more information or to sign up, contact Wild Connections' Board Member, Karl Ford at [earthford@aol.com](mailto:earthford@aol.com). Carpools will leave Denver and Colorado Springs or meet at the trailhead at 9:00 AM on June 18.

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**Summer South Park Alpine Restoration Projects - Register Now!**



**7/20 - 7/21 South Park Alpine Restoration Project at Sheep Creek**

- Wild Connections is excited to team back up with longtime partners USFS South Park Ranger District, Mosquito Range Heritage Initiative (MRHI), and Wildlands Restoration Volunteers (WRV).
- For more info and to register, go to WRV's page: [here](#).

### **8/16 - 8/18 South Park Alpine Restoration Project at Beaver Creek**

- This is our second 2019 South Park Alpine project, again partnering with USFS South Park Ranger District, MRHI, and WRV.
- For more info and to register, go to WRV's page: [here](#).

*Jim, Misi, John, Kristin, Alison, Claude, Deb, Karl and John*

- All of us at Wild Connections

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#### **Find us on social media:**



**Thanks for the photos!** Credit from top to bottom:  
*Curt Nimz, Bob Wick, 350CC, Joel Marx, CMC, RMW, John Sztukowski, Films for a Green Planet, USFS, Misi Ballard*