



September 2019

Hello

September - the bridge between hot, hot summer and excursions to see the first aspen glow.

But before you go, Wild Connections urges you to send your management plan comments to BLM. Hear this: BLM National is ignoring public input and systematically rolling back proposed protections in their draft management plan. Moreover they are prioritizing development over conservation - 98% of the land is proposed to be open to energy development. *These are your public lands now and for the future.*

Register your protest now. Download Wild Connections' Comment Guide below from our website



Table Mountain over Little Hole, 2017. Table Mountain proposed Wilderness. Photo: EcoFlight

Wild Connections' Public Comment Guide for the BLM Eastern Colorado Resource Management Plan Draft

by John Sztukowski

BLM needs to hear from you! BLM National is ignoring public input and systematically rolling back proposed protections in this plan's preferred alternative (from over 278,000 acres to just 47,600!), while prioritizing development on our most valuable local BLM public lands.

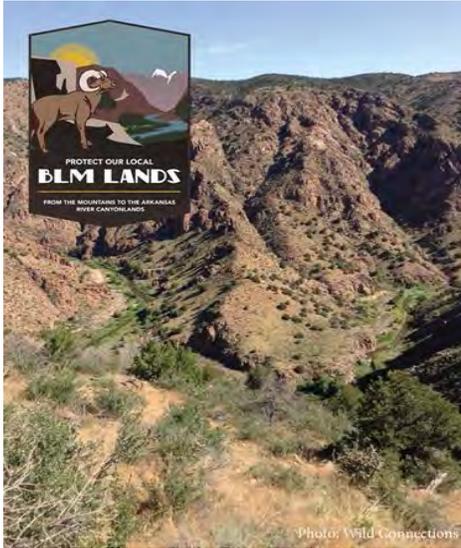
Overview: The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Royal Gorge Field Office (RGFO) in Cañon City is currently revising its Resource Management Plan (RMP), which began in 2015. This plan guides decisions for lands managed by the BLM's RGFO for the next 20-30 years. For example, this process will determine if an area should be open to oil and gas development, mining, managed for hiking, hunting, or fishing, set aside for wildlife habitat, etc.

Why Comment: These public lands belong to all Americans and are managed on our behalf by the BLM, therefore it is important to make your voice heard in this process.

Suggested Talking Points:

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BLM Wildlands Hikes



Grape Creek Day Hike

Temple Canyon to Ecology Park

Saturday, September 7, 2019

9:00 AM to 4:00 PM (Trailhead to Trailhead Hiking Times)
A BLM Wildlands Outing

Explore Grape Creek from Temple Canyon to Ecology Park near Cañon City and south of Royal Gorge. Moderately strenuous, 5 miles mostly off-trail along a stream bottom, with numerous stream crossings and some easy climbing over obstacles

For more information or to register for the hike, contact Jim Lockhart at 719-385-0045 or jlock@datawest.net by 6:00 pm Friday Sept 6. [More...](#)



Hiking the Ben Tyler Trail into Lost Creek Wilderness

Friday September 13, 2019

9:30 a.m. to 3:30p.m. (Trailhead to Trailhead hiking time)

Join Wild Connections and Colorado Mountain Club for a hike along Rock Creek into the Lost Creek Wilderness area to observe the recovery at 2018 restoration project. Wild Connections, Trout Unlimited and the Forest Service improved habitat for Greenback cutthroat trout.

Moderately strenuous, 7 miles, 1250 ft. elevation change. Maximum 15 people. For information and to sign up by 6:00 PM Thursday, Sept 12, e-mail Claude Neumann at claudeneumann@earthlink.net or 720-524-1645 or (C) 720-931-3039. 720-931-3039. [More...](#)



Badger Creek Hike

Sunday, September 15

9:00 am - 3:30 pm (Trailhead to trailhead hiking time)

A BLM Wildlands outing and cosponsored by GARNA

Badger Creek, located about 10 miles east of Salida in Bighorn Sheep Canyon, is one of few perennial waterways in the otherwise rugged and arid Arkansas River Canyonlands. This easy-to-moderate hike of up to six miles and 400 feet elevation gain begins at Badger Creek's confluence with the

Arkansas River and follows a historic wagon route along the creek on BLM managed public lands.

Maximum 15 participants. For more trip and carpool information and to register, contact John Sztukowski, 817-939-4239 or e-mail john@wildconnections.org by 5:00 PM, Saturday, September 14. [More...](#)

South Park Alpine Restoration Projects

A multi-year joint project of Wild Connections, Wildlands Restoration Volunteers (WRV), Mosquito Range Heritage Initiative (MRHI) and the USFS South Park Ranger District

The South Park Alpine Project, which began in 2018 in the headwaters of North Tarryall Creek, continued this August with five volunteer workdays.



Beaver Creek

At the wetlands near Fairplay, Morgan Crowley, WRV's project manager, reported that "volunteers completed more than 100 feet of solid, spectacular boardwalk. We have another 80 or so feet well underway."

Steps were built from the wetland up the hill to reconnect Forest Trail 747, and 300 feet of willows were trimmed back along the board walk.



Sheep Creek

Materials were staged earlier and the illegal route was ripped by WRV in preparation for the Labor Day volunteer workdays.

A hearty group of 25 worked their way over Breakneck Pass to camp in the beautiful Sheep Creek Valley - the moose were watching in the morning. Starting with a long climb to over 12,000 ft., the group worked their way back down the drainage over 2 miles, raking, seeding and mulching the illegal track, returning this alpine valley to the wildlife who call it home. An area bow hunter expressed great thanks for the groups' tremendous work to restore this important wildlife habitat to its natural state.



The end of field season

Summer 2019 field projects have come to a most successful close. Great kudos to all the folks from [Wild Connections](#), [Mosquito Range Heritage Initiative](#), and especially [Wildlands Restoration Volunteers](#) who managed all details of materials and equipment logistics, food service and work day team's tasks.

And special thanks to our Forest Service partner the [South Park Ranger District](#) for technical consultation and logistical support for all of these projects. The efforts to restore and repair headwaters and riparian areas will continue in 2020.

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

- All of us at Wild Connections

Find us on social media



Thanks for the photos - credit from top to bottom:

Wild Connections, John Stansfield, Barry Ballard, Karl Ford and Misi Ballard.
