

Friends of Mount Evans and Lost Creek Wildernesses



March Newsletter 2023

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Note from the New Chair

by Steve West



Since October, Matt Komos has been holding two positions on the Friends of Mt. Evans and Lost Creek Wildernesses (FOMELC) Board. The Board has been looking to fill the position of chairperson. With that said, I was asked to step in to fill the position and relieve Matt.

My name is Steve West. Colorado has been my home since 1961 and as a child my family would travel to the Mt. Evans area for Sunday breakfast cookouts. So, the area became my back yard. When my boys were younger, we would hike and backpack into Chicago Lakes, Beartrack Lakes, Resthouse Meadows, and Hell's Hole, those being our favorites.

I began volunteering with Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado (VOC) in 1991 and traveled throughout Colorado for projects. Crew leader, project manager, crosscut sawyer and instructor of traditional wilderness trail skills are some of the positions that I have held. In 1999, VOC began association with the two wilderness areas by initiating "adopt-a-trail" projects to supplement forest trail crews. I was fortunate enough to lead crews on these projects until 2021.

In 2004 FOMELC came into existence to provide stewardship opportunities for the Mt. Evans and Lost Creek Wilderness areas. I jumped at the chance to be part of the organization at that point.

Almost 20 years later, FOMELC has provided Forest Service support in many areas:

- Invasive weed eradication
- Adopt-a-trail projects
- Patrolling trails to encourage users to be aware of Leave no Trace principles
- Trailhead hosts

Today FOMELC has a unique opportunity to provide more Forest Service stewardship to the two wilderness areas. There are not enough Forest Service employees to address the needs of the areas. To do this, more FOMELC volunteers are required. As the new chairperson I hope to increase recruitment of new volunteers by 20% starting in 2023. If you can only give one day of volunteering, you will be entitled to hike/backpack guilt free since you have given something to the wilderness areas.

Thank you, Steve, from all of us at FOMELC!



Invasive



From the Weed Patch – Alan Rockwood

Spring is here and the weeds are emerging from the dormancy phase. FOMELC has NOT really been dormant the last few months. 2023 promises to be the most active weed eradication season yet for organization. Starting with some good news: We have been successful with our fund-raising activities. The Colorado Department of Agriculture's Noxious Weed Program has awarded FOMELC a grant of \$12,000, up from \$8,500 in 2022. Nick Race, weed manager for the eastern zone of the Pike National Forest was successful in securing a \$10,000 grant from Colorado Parks and Wildlife for habitat preservation (weed control). FOMELC will participate in that initiative. We anticipate that the southern zone of the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest will again support our treatments for Captain Mountain and Beartrack Lakes Trail infestations.

We are expanding our partnership program for weed eradication. Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado will join us on projects along the Captain Mountain Trail: "South Meadow" and "Pedee Creek." They will provide 20 volunteers for each project. We will need a crew from FOMELC to work as crew leaders for those projects. New this season will be a program with the Littleton Boy Scouts, Troop 114. The Scouts will focus on pulling cheatgrass in the Pedee Creek Meadow. I will survey this site with the Scout leaders before the event; otherwise, the FOMELC volunteers will not participate in the project. This will give FOMELC volunteers more time to focus on the musk and Canada thistle.

Most of our increased funding will be used to hire additional contractors for treatments. FOMELC's volunteer program will be a repeat of the projects in 2022. Look for the schedule of treatment projects to published in April. We will again be using [SIGN UP](#) for project scheduling and registration.

FOMELC will have a very full itinerary of projects this season. Please think about your participation and how we can increase active members — join us and bring a friend or two!



Greetings from the trail!

Wyatt Stanland
Trails Coordinator

The trails program at FOMELC is gearing up for a fun and productive 2023 season.

Following our successful 2022 season where we adopted the Abyss Trail, we will be mixing it up this year. Our May project will continue on the Abyss Trail to complete a series of stone stairs on a steep and washed-out section of trail. For our June, July, and August projects, we will adopt the Beartrack Lakes trail from the Camp Rock Trailhead.

Following the success of our weekend project in Lost Park last year, we will be hosting another weekend project this September! The location of this project is yet to be determined.



The 2023 trail projects schedule will be posted in [SIGN UP](#) in April, so watch out for that!

As always when spring approaches, it is almost time to start patrolling the trails again, so update that crosscut saw certification, get your Survey123 ready, and get out on trail patrols!

Also new to the trails program for 2023, we are starting a Trail Projects Committee. This committee is a group of volunteers who want to be more involved in the trails program. The committee will open communication channels between volunteers and trail program leadership, will provide a place to share trail maintenance knowledge, and will more easily connect volunteers with opportunities to improve their crew leadership skills. The committee



will meet one or two times a year to discuss trail maintenance techniques, project schedules, trail maintenance strategy, and more. Contact wyatt@fomelc.org to sign up and learn more!

December 2022 was FOMELC's Grant Month at the Platte Canyon Community Partnership (Resale Boutique)

FOMELC has received a \$4000 grant from PCCP, the cute little, totally volunteer run Resale Boutique in Bailey. FOMELC grant requirements included volunteering our time and talent to help them help others.

During the month of December FOMELC performed 133 volunteer hours making ARC runs, working in the shop sorting merchandise, performing building maintenance, changing their fall décor to winter and Christmas merchandise, and putting up their Christmas tree and outdoor lights.

I would like to thank the many volunteers who made this Grant possible:

Melanie Brown, Andrew Hoffman, Erin Kraemer, Holly Myers, Dee Lyons, Robyn Thompson, Nancy Lynch, Amy Brown, Amanda Brown, Elizabeth Motley, Deb Grass, and John Kruse.

The boutique is located right off route 285 in the center of Bailey. Their address is **60629 U.S. Highway 285**. **Please stop and support the Boutique when you are visiting the Bailey area.**





Gordon Brown, Dee Lyons, and Melanie Brown accept a \$4000 check from the Platte Canyon Community Partnership.

FOMELC Board Members

Chairman: Steve West
steve@fomelc.org

Trail Projects Coordinator: Wyatt Stanland
wyatt@fomelc.org

Secretary: Vacant

Membership Coordinator: Joe O'Leary
joe@fomelc.org

Web Information Tech Lead: Deb Grass
lildeb@fomelc.org

Noxious Weed Projects Coordinator: Alan Rockwood
alan@fomelc.org

Marketing/Education Team Lead: Gordon Brown
gordon@fomelc.org

Newsletter/Wilderness Training Program:
Dee Lyons dee@fomelc.org

Treasurer: Matt Komos
matt@fomelc.org

Forest Service Liaison: Ralph Bradt
ralph.bradt@usda.gov

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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“Between every two pine trees there is a door leading to a new way of life.” - John Muir