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October 2019 Newsletter



Fall colors in Mt Evans Wilderness – Abyss Lake Trail
(Photo by Guy Hoisington)

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2019 Website Fundraising Status

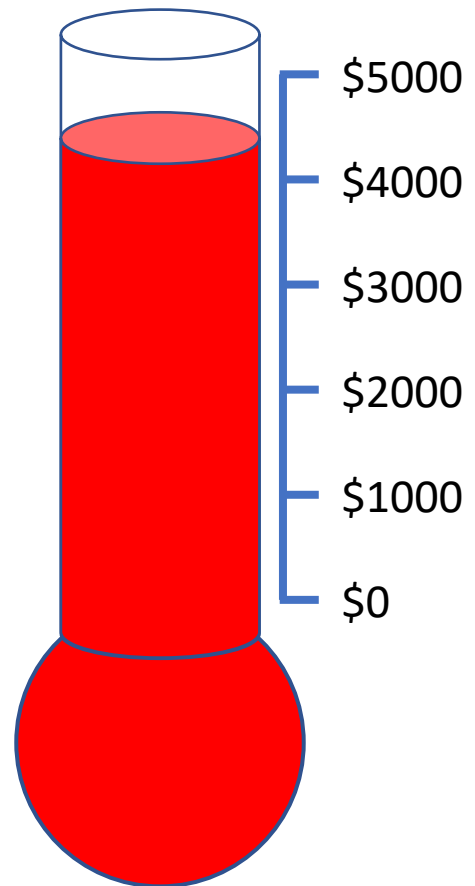
Almost There!

Thank you to all who have made contributions to support the integrity of the Mount Evans and Lost Creek Wildernesses. Your support is helping us revamp our website, which will contribute to our wilderness efforts in the future. For those who believe in this work and were unable to contribute time this past summer, please consider a monetary contribution, no matter how large or small, to help sustain our efforts.

Please help us keep our website running by making a donation to FOMELC:

<http://www.fomelc.org/contribute>

Your contribution to our 501(c)3 organization is tax-deductible.



Note from the Chair – By Peter Vrolijk

Fall Reflection

We enter the transition from fall to winter – the frenzied growth of plants and nature during the brief summer months has given way to the Earth resting for the next spring and summer’s activity. So, too, our volunteers, who put so much effort into the brief period between the retreat of high country snow and its return, who cataloged the state of the wilderness, who fought back the invasive plants that seek to overwhelm the ecological balance, and who worked to improve the trails throughout the wilderness and educate people to the value of this precious space so close to our homes, now is the time for rest and reflection

“Nature’s first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold.
Her early leaf’s a flower;
But only so an hour.
Then leaf subsides to leaf.
So Eden sank to grief,
So dawn goes down to day.
Nothing gold can stay.”
– **Robert Frost**



Fall scene in Craig Park, Lost Creek Wilderness

Thank you to everyone who contributed to another successful season. Even though there is always more that we wished could be accomplished, it is gratifying to look back on all that was achieved. Every little bit helps, and everyone who made a contribution should feel a deep sense of fulfillment for her or his efforts.

FOMELC Year End Member Celebration October 5th Trail Construction & Dinner

AG - Brookside Trail Construction – By Steve West & Peter Vrolijk

As a part of the Friends of Mount Evans and Lost Creek Wilderness end of year celebration 3 volunteers continued building the new AG-Brookside trail. Thanks to Deb, Keith and Peter for the day's work.

End of Year Trail Construction

Every year at the conclusion of the season, FOMELC volunteers contribute to trail construction as part of a plan to improve the dangerous parking conditions at the popular Ben Tyler trailhead along U.S. 285. This plan involves adding new trail and rerouting the Ben Tyler trail to a new parking lot more removed from the highway and to extend the Brookside AG trail to the same trailhead. The volunteers completed 180 feet of new sustainable trail. This is a continuation of the project started 3 years ago. It is estimated at the present time the trail is half way completed.



(Photos by Steve West)

FOMELC Year End Member Celebration October 5th

Volunteer Awards 2019

The Friends of Mount Evans and Lost Creek this year initiated three awards to recognize the contributions and achievements of 3 outstanding members.

1. **Lifetime Achievement Award**, intended to acknowledge years of contributions and efforts in the wilderness areas
2. **Volunteer of the Year Award**, given to a member who made exceptional contributions over the past year,
3. **New Volunteer Award**, to recognize the efforts of someone who hit the ground running and contributed to many areas of the organization.

Lifetime Achievement Award 2019 :

The FOMELC Lifetime Achievement award was presented to **Dan Lincoln** for his efforts in the Mount Evans and Lost Creek wildernesses stretching back to the 1960's when he volunteered to help fight fire in the Mount Evans Wilderness.



Photo above by Alan Rockwood
Photo right by Steve West



Dan was central to the establishment of the invasive plant program in FOMELC, and he helped train the first volunteers to apply herbicide treatments in wilderness. This remains a FOMELC distinction – a volunteer organization trusted to apply herbicide in USFS-stewarded wilderness. Dan also identified the Class A invasive plant, orange hawkweed, for the first time in Colorado on Upper Bear Creek.

Dan has contributed to the wildernesses through his involvement in both FOMELC and the Front Range chapter of the Back-Country Horsemen. Dan was involved in the establishment of FOMELC in 2005, and he continues to provide horse-assisted support to backcountry invasive plant treatment operations. As the photo below illustrates, Dan is also active in trail-clearing efforts. Thanks Dan for all your efforts and contributions to the wilderness areas we hold dear.

Volunteer of the Year 2019

Charlotte Wytias earned the Volunteer of the Year recognition through her tireless efforts with the Platte Canyon Community Partnership(PCCP) (a Bailey nonprofit organization) , where she is a volunteer. Her involvement with the annual FOMELC Boys and Girls Club event helps to introduce children to wilderness. Charlotte’s involvement with the PCCP is instrumental in FOMELC receiving a grant from PCCP in 2018 and 2019. Charlotte contributed to the Trail Host program, served as a driver for projects that required a through-hike, helped organize, host, and prepare food for both annual All-Hands Day events. She has been someone you can count on to offer help throughout her 5-year tenure as a member.



Photos by Dee Lyons

Outstanding New Volunteer 2019

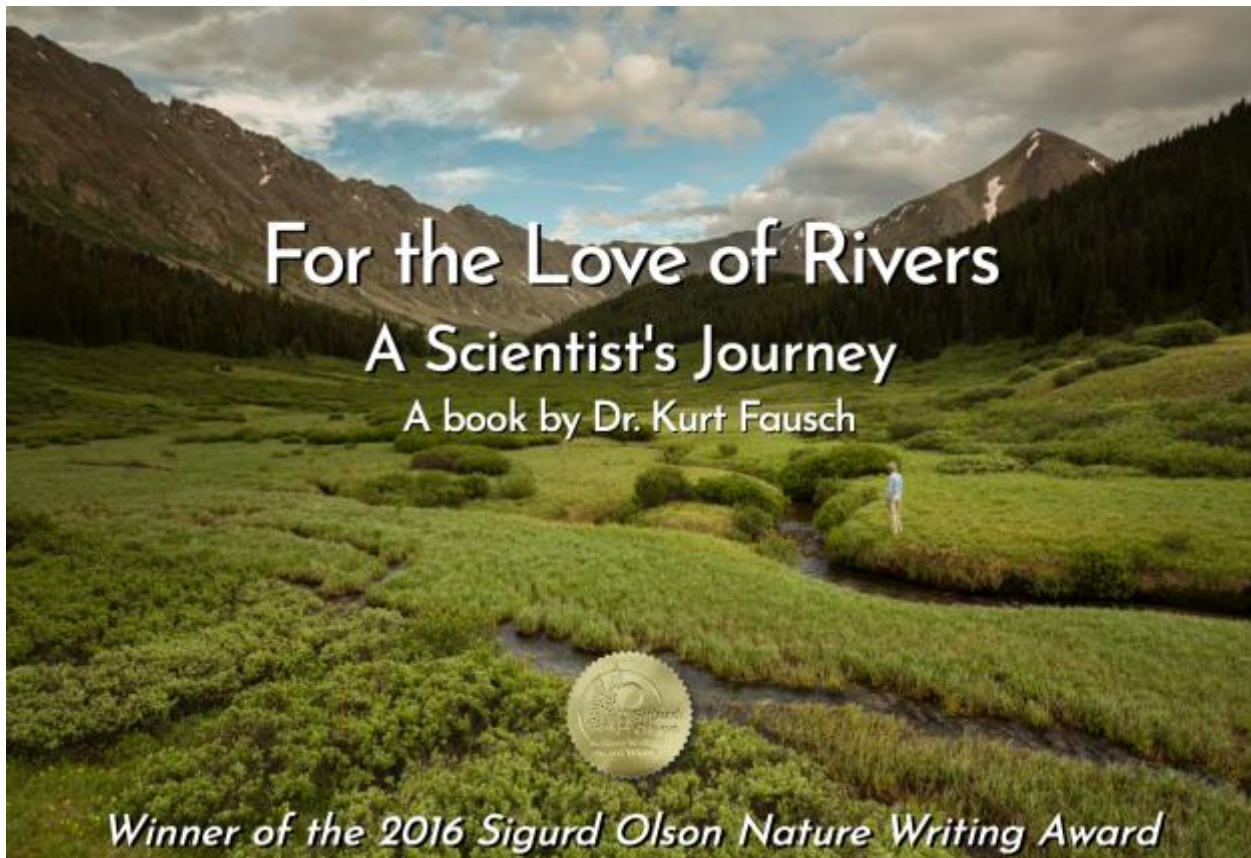
Deb Grass has been and continues to be instrumental in the revamping of the FOMELC website. Her experience in website design and development is proving invaluable. More importantly, Deb became involved in all aspects of the organization in her inaugural year, completing trail patrols with her husband John, contributing to herbicide treatments, and participating in trail maintenance and construction projects. We look forward to Deb's continued help and involvement!



Photo above by Pete Vrolijk
Photo left by Joe Gude

Early Announcement – December Special Presentation

For our last monthly meeting of the year on December 4 (6:30-8:00 pm), we will have an honored speaker, Dr. Kurt Fausch, talk with us about conservation from the perspective of rivers. Kurt is an emeritus professor at Colorado State University and the author of *For the Love of Rivers*, a book that won the Sigurd Olson Nature Writing Award. Please plan on joining us for a very special evening of interesting, soul-searching, and provocative ecological discussions.



FOMELC WEED ERADICATION PROGRAM

From the Noxious Weed Patch – *Alan*



FOMELC's weed program was wrapping up at the first of October but the first snows put an end to it either way. It was another very successful season generating a value of more than \$60,000, as measured by the direct and in-kind match for the Noxious Weed Grant from the Colorado Department of Agriculture.

A major new emphasis in 2019 was the noxious weed inventory of Lost Creek Wilderness. Volunteers and contract weed surveyors completed a comprehensive inventory of all system trails and priority off trail sites in the Wilderness. It parallels our program in Mt Evans Wilderness last year.

Peter completed the last section of Craig Park Trail on October 9th, which was "clean." Few days earlier Peter and I mapped the large infestations of Canada and Musk thistles in Craig Meadows (Payne Creek Trail). We even found a small infestation of Yellow toadflax. FOMELC has worked hard to define the perimeters of the major infestations like Craig Meadow, Hankins Pass and the "junction of Hankins Pass and Goose Creek Trails." These will be priority areas in the development of a new noxious weed treatment program by the South Platte Ranger District. (If you haven't looked recently, I would encourage you to look at the "Maps" section of our website to the results of FOMELC's season - weeds and trails maps. They are impressive! As I have noted before our program treated four Lost Creek Wilderness areas this season - Rolling Creek, Hankins Pass/Goose Creek junction, Lower Goose Creek and Wigwam Creek East.

We will complete the final report to the Colorado Department of Agriculture this month and turn our attention to the NWSA Wilderness Stewardship Performance grant final report. That will require fine-tuning of the raw data collected for the weed maps. Then, it will be time start planning for the 2020 season! We can always use more leaders with the weed program. The scope of our activities continues to increase.

I cannot thank all of the volunteers enough for your support of FOMELC's weed program as well as those clearing trails that make it so much easier to access the sites we treat!

THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS FOR ANOTHER GREAT YEAR!

Volunteers Needed

Interested in taking an active part in FOMELC operations? There are many behind-the-scenes tasks where administration help is needed. Board Secretary position also available. Contact admin@fomelc.org



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.

I Have a Question!

Got a general or specific trail question? Admin@fomelc.org email will go to all board members and one of us will get back to you.

How do I become a volunteer with FOMELC?

Check out our website to sign up. www.fomelc.org

Like your Newsletter?

Let Us know!

admin@fomelc.org