



## Looking Forward

By Mike Corbin, PWV Board Chair

PWV is working to get back to a normal or almost normal patrolling season this summer. There will still be some COVID restrictions but we are hoping, with vaccines, more of our members can get back out on the trails. Of course, there will be fewer trails to get out on but as the summer goes on we believe more trails will be opened as PWV and the Forest Service clear and repair the trails.



PWV 2020-2021 Board Chair Mike Corbin

We are making plans on how PWV will assist the Forest Service in getting the

trails opened for the public and will be announcing the details when we know them. At this time, we don't know specifically what needs to be done on each trail.

*We are looking forward to getting back on the trails and hopefully later in the summer being able to have some social gatherings.*

PWV will have Spring Training this year but it will be different! There will not be a Kick-Off-Night. Rather each Animal Group will be trained by its Animal Group Leaders. Spring Training will be held at the Buckhorn Church Camp but will be Saturday only and will consist of only the Training Trail.

We are looking forward to getting back on the trails and hopefully later in the summer being able to have some social gatherings.

## “Reopen Your Favorite Trails” on March 30

By Tom Collins

As you're all aware, the Cameron Peak Fire caused significant damage to many of our wonderful trails in the Canyon Lakes Ranger District. This was Colorado's largest wildfire, destroying over 208,000 acres of the Roosevelt National Forest. There are 122 miles of trails within the burned area,

of which over 42 miles are severely damaged. Given our long history of supporting the Forest Service, we intend to leverage past experiences, particularly the 2012 High Park fire, which consumed over 87,000 acres. We will be focusing on the trails and bridges that have been most damaged. This restoration matters to our community.



Led by Jerry Hanley and with contributors from the video, web page design, and marketing teams, including Peter and Renee Skiba, Jud Haverkamp, Jeff Randa, Sean Orner, Celia Walker, Tom Collins, Sandy Sticken, Janet Caille, and Fred Allen we are launching a GoFundMe Campaign at the end of March.

We also leveraged an expert in crowdfunding, Grace Wright, who volunteered her time and efforts to help us pull this together. This 90 second video (<https://youtu.be/b1MM0hxxxAc>) was created to demonstrate the need and show the impact of the fire. It's an impressive piece and one that we hope you will share with your friends through social media to let people know of PWV's campaign to restore our trails. Our goal is to raise

significant funds for the ongoing trail restoration.

*“Reopen Your Favorite Trails” on March 30. All donations will be used to support these trail restoration efforts.*

Over the past month we have reached out to over 70 local organizations including the media, informing them of our efforts with the intent of having them reach out to their contacts to raise awareness of our work community wide. We have also contacted elected representatives to both make them aware and ask for their support.

Dealing with the impact and magnitude of this fire is way beyond normal everyday efforts and we need all the help we can get to restore these trails. To financially assist our efforts, please consider donating and sending this link to your friends [Reopen Your Favorite Trails](http://charity.gofundme.com/pwv-rebuild) on March 30 (<http://charity.gofundme.com/pwv-rebuild>). All donations will be used to support these trail restoration efforts.

## Recruiting in a Pandemic

*By Celia Walker*

In the Fall of 2020 PWV recruiting for 2021 was one huge question mark. Would people be brave enough to apply? Would we be out on the trails again? How many of 2020’s applicants, whom we could not invite to join PWV last year, would stick with us and re-apply in 2021? How can we have animal groups under pandemic conditions? How could we train without Kick Off Night or Spring Training weekend, because we won’t field untrained recruits. What about interview weekends? Who would represent the USFS in interviews, given both Kevin and Kristy’s retirements?

Thanks to the hard work, ingenuity, and much time on the parts of a number of PWV members, we began to see a way through our processes by late December. Everything is a little bit different, but PWV will have more than 50 recruits in 2021.

2 Revised 04/01/21

The average age is a little younger than usual, there are a few more men than usual (perhaps because of an increased desire to help with trail restoration), but their eagerness to be a part of PWV is as high as ever.

Here’s how we did it: in recognition of the 74 applicants from 2020, we first opened the application to them, and about 20 applied. We then opened the application to the contact list of people expressing an interest in joining in 2020 after the application cycle closed. When we discovered we had room for a few more applicants, we then opened the application to those who expressed an interest this winter. Kevin Cannon was authorized to represent the USFS, and Jim Zakely began arranging four-hour blocks of half-hour interviews, three days a week for three weeks. Yup: 56 applicants x 30 minutes each for a total of 28 hours of interviews with Kevin, Jim and Celia Walker! The result was an excellent new class, eager for training.

AGLs will begin in April contacting the eight animal groups (with six or seven recruits instead of the usual 10-12), and materials in the past presented at Kick Off Night or the Friday of Spring Training will be guided self-study with virtual reviews led by the AGLs. On May 22, a Training Trail Day just for recruits and staff, all masked and distanced, will be held at Buckhorn Camp.

What we’ve learned? With some creativity and extra effort, the seemingly impossible becomes possible. The public really does value our forests and still wants to help. And necessity sometimes creates new opportunities, like improved training and more personal attention for recruits. But don’t ask Jim, Celia, or Kevin to participate in another Zoom meeting--we’re THROUGH with that!

## What’s Inside

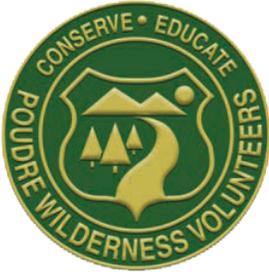
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## Newsletter Team

Mark L. Snyder, *Editor*  
Caitlin Mohr, *Designer*



*Tim Van Donselaar with Banjo. PWV stock patrollers making plans to support trail rebuilding, see p. 6.*



## POUDRE WILDERNESS VOLUNTEERS MISSION

The mission of Poudre Wilderness Volunteers is to assist the Canyon Lakes Ranger District of the United States Forest Service in managing and protecting wilderness and backcountry areas within its jurisdiction.

To achieve this mission Poudre Wilderness Volunteers recruits, trains, equips, and fields citizen volunteers to serve as wilderness rangers and hosts for the purpose of educating the public, and provides other appropriate support to these wild areas.

### Opportunity to Learn More about Weeds

By Jack Morgan

Howdy folks! I write this note today in the middle of a blizzard dumping over two feet of snow at my place SW of Fort Collins. Interesting as this is to me, I believe I'm about ready for this weather to pass and get out on the trail. Maybe you are too! While this moisture is certainly a good thing for plants and wildlife, it is also good news for the trillions of weed seeds and biennial/perennial invasive plants just waiting to take off and be proper pests this year. I'd like to recommend an antidote, a course from CSU Extension that should be useful for old-timers as well as newbies: Invasive Species 101. The course, comprising four 1½ hour sessions from 6:00–7:30 pm on the following dates and topics via Zoom (in the comfort of your home) from late March until early May, will equip you with the knowledge you can use identifying and documenting weeds on patrols. While the first session may have occurred by the time this newsletter gets out and read, the remaining three stand alone, are free, and only require your registration at <http://bit.ly/Invspp> prior to the class(es).

#### March 24 – Invasive Species – Understanding the Issues

Alicia Doran, Invasive Species Management Coordinator, Jefferson County

#### April 7 – Intro to Integrated Pest Management

Steve Sauer, Boulder County Weeds Supervisor, Boulder County Parks and Open Space

#### April 21 – Weed Identification and Management

Casey Cisneros, District Manager, Larimer County Weed District

#### May 5 - Colorado's Aquatic Nuisance Species

Robert Walters, Invasive Species Specialist, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

On a related note, the Weed Crew will continue this year conducting numerous socially-distanced weed pulls where you can put your new-found knowledge of invasive weeds, plus your hiking and other volunteer skills to the test as we help the Canyon Lakes Ranger District manage these weeds. In addition to pulling the biennials that succumb to such treatment, we assist the CLRD by documenting more troublesome perennial weeds that the Forest Service tackles with a spraying weed crew when funding is available.

*The Weed Crew will continue this year conducting numerous socially-distanced weed pulls.*

A notice/schedule of the 2021 weed pulls will be forthcoming in the weeks ahead. In the meantime, it's a good time to check out your hiking/working gear and get in shape for another opportunity with other PWV patrollers having a blast managing weeds. No prior experience needed, other than the basic training and experience of all PWV patrollers. We usually target just one or two weed species at a time, so it's easy to learn and be effective in no time at all! And a fun way to meet other PWV Patrollers.

See you on the trail.

### Emergency Communication on PWV Patrols

By Alan Meyer

Imagine you are patrolling for PWV and a wildfire starts and is headed your way! You might not be aware of the fire or perhaps you see smoke but don't know which direction it is heading. You may not be in cell-phone range and you could be in the midst of a multi-day backcountry trip.

This happened to multiple PWV members in 2020, with the Cameron Peak Fire which grew into Colorado's largest recorded wildfire. This fire started on August 13 and on that day two PWV members were on a backpack trip in the Comanche Wilderness and saw the smoke from a distance, two members were in Trap Park and saw the smoke fairly close to them, one member was completing a solo backpack trip and saw nearby smoke when driving back from the Rawah Wilderness, another member was going into the north Rawahs, reached his camp, saw the smoke, advised other hikers, turned around, hiking 13 hours in all and came out in the dark, and another member was about to start a multi-day Rawah trip but canceled upon learning about the fire.

All of these PWV members were carrying emergency communication devices, as required on these trails. However, lessons were learned on how PWV members (and their family or friends at home) could be better trained in using these devices to stay informed during emergencies such as a wildfire. This article will summarize how PWV uses emergency communication devices and some of the

improvements underway.

Many of the trails PWV patrols are designated as “hazardous” by the USFS Canyon Lakes Ranger District (CLRD). This designation is given to trails where falling trees are prevalent or are in remote areas. As USFS volunteers, PWV members are required to take an emergency communication device on any of these hazardous trails. This enables the PWV member to reach authorities in case of an emergency, such as a medical problem with themselves or a member of the public.

To ensure PWV members have access to a required communication device, CLRD owns some USFS Radios and SPOT X 2-way satellite communicators that are available for check-out by PWV members. In addition, many PWV members have purchased their own satellite communicators and typically take these on all patrols, whether on hazardous trails or not, and also on personal non-PWV outdoor activities.

The types of devices have evolved over the years with technology advancements and the most common ones currently used by PWV members are:

Device	2-way communication	Avail. for checkout
USFS Radio	Yes (line of sight)	Yes
SPOT X	Yes (satellite)	Yes
inReach	Yes (satellite)	No
SPOT	No	No

Some of the key points about these devices are:

- CLRD owns multiple radios and SPOT X 2-way satellite communicators that can be checked-out for patrols on hazardous trails.

- The USFS Radios need to be within line-of-sight of a repeater tower, and there are several in our patrolling area, so this means there are locations in the backcountry where a radio will not work (such as in a ravine). An advantage is the ability to directly talk with someone in CLRD to report any problems or to ask questions about smoke or fire seen in the area. A disadvantage is that these radios are fairly bulky, heavy to carry, and may not work in some situations.
- The SPOT X (GlobalStar) and inReach (Garmin) are both 2-way satellite communicators. These devices will work when there is a clear view of the sky and they allow 2-way communication with others via text messaging and email. This allows PWV members to keep in touch with someone at home, both for personal communication and also in case of emergencies.
- The older SPOT models are one-way communication only. Messages can be sent from the trail to someone at home, but they are unable to respond.
- All of the satellite devices support an SOS feature which should be used any time there is an emergency requiring help to be sent to your location. Pressing the SOS button will send a message to the International Emergency Response Coordination Center (IERCC) which will then route the call to the nearest emergency response organization. For PWV patrols, this will typically be Larimer County Search & Rescue (LCSAR).

For patrols on remote and hazardous trails, PWV members will be equipped with a communication device either of their own or checked-out from CLRD. This was true for the PWV members who were in the vicinity of the Cameron Peak Fire when it started, but we identified several areas where PWV could do a better job in preparing our members to effectively

communicate in times of emergency. The key lessons learned include:

- CLRD does not actively track down their volunteers (or employees) who may be on the trail during a wildfire. Instead, CLRD expects the volunteers to use their communication devices and common sense to determine if there could be a dangerous situation and to get off the trail (and help any members of the public do the same).
- Many PWV members own older SPOT 1-way satellite devices. This means there is no way for someone at home to provide information such as “hey, there’s a fire near you, please get out!”.
- For PWV members with 2-way satellite communicators, some lacked the knowledge of how someone at home could reach out and send information directly to their device.

*As USFS volunteers, PWV members are required to take an emergency communication device on any of these hazardous trails. This enables the PWV member to reach authorities in case of an emergency, such as a medical problem with themselves or a member of the public.*

As a result of our experience and learning during the Cameron Peak Fire, PWV is taking several actions in 2021:

- An incentive program will be offered to PWV members to offset the cost of a 2-way satellite device. This will be targeted at members without any personal device or owners of older 1-way SPOT units.
- Our website’s personal profiles section has been expanded for members to record the “contact number” of their satellite device. This will allow other PWV members to directly communicate with each other via their devices.

- Training material is being created that will help our members, and their family & friends at home, to better know how to perform 2-way communication with their satellite communicators.

In addition, PWV members (and their family & friends at home) will be encouraged to sign up for Larimer County Alerts so they will receive text messages about emergencies in Larimer County, such as wildfires. To sign up, either:

- Text LETA to 888777
- Visit [nocoalert.org](http://nocoalert.org) and sign up there

Just like First Aid kits, we hope that PWV members don't need to use their communication devices for true emergencies. However, we want our members to carry both of these items on patrols and be trained on how to use them if needed.

## Trail Crew Needs You

*By Steve Musial*

We are off to a good start this year in clearing trails with trees down and we have a great team of trail clearing enthusiasts. We will also be looking at repairing drainage issues on the trails.

I am excited to be leading the Trail Crew this year and if you would like to join us, please contact me, Steve Musial, Trail Crew Leader.

Since I started with PWV in 2016 the trail crew does not get credit for trees cleared or contacts made individually while they were on a trail maintenance patrol. We are changing that this year for trail crew members, so that when you are on a patrol of any kind you will get credit for any trees you clear from the trail.

Mike Shearer and I have been in a tree clearing competition by ourselves (at least that's what it seemed like to me) over the last few years that didn't really seem fair to me because none of the trail crew were getting credit for the trees that they cleared. So starting this year all of us while doing a trail maintenance patrol or a regular one, we will get credit for all of our

tree clearing and also people we make contact with while out on the trail, which I have found to be some of the best contacts I have made out on the trail. A lot of people really care about us taking the time to clear and take care of the trails they are hiking on.

Now I know some of you might not think of this as a big deal but I do think some of you will. We can now keep score amongst all of us. (That's my competitive self-talking.)



*Manual double sided 53 inch chain saw that weighs around 11 ounces*

Recently I was on the Crosier Mountain trail clearing with Sam Cooper and Mike Shearer. We cleared the Glen Haven and Rainbow trails and we also tried out a new manual double sided 53 inch chain saw that weighs around 11 ounces. We were able to cut a 14 inch tree off the trail in about 10 minutes. Just thought you might like to know about such a tool to have in your pack.

We will be reading the trail reports and will be updating our plan to work on the trails. And there will be prizes for those who clear the most trees off the trail this season. And if you read the fine print, Steve Musial and Mike Shearer are not eligible to win them.

So it is good to see everyone getting out there and clearing when they can, thank you! I know we will have a lot to clear this

year as the trails open up, I for one am looking forward to it!

Thanks and see you out on the trail.

## USFS Introduction and Outlook for the 2021 Season

*By Matt Cowan, USFS*

I'm writing to you all to introduce myself and give you a quick outlook for the 2021 season. My name is Matt Cowan and I'm filling in behind both Kevin Cannon and Kristy Wumkes as the Wilderness, Trails, and Wild and Scenic River Program Manager and Volunteer Coordinator on the Canyon Lakes Ranger District. I first want to thank you for your service. Kevin, Kristy, and Mike Corbin have given me a great background into the development of PWV and the amazing work that you all have done, and I intend to continue and expand this partnership long into the future.

*My name is Matt Cowan and I'm filling in behind both Kevin Cannon and Kristy Wumkes as the Wilderness, Trails, and Wild and Scenic River Program Manager and Volunteer Coordinator on the Canyon Lakes Ranger District.*

Our Visitor Information Services staff have been getting inundated with calls from the public with questions like: "Why is the Blue Lake Trail closed?" and "When will you open up access to the campsites in the Comanche Peak Wilderness?" It's totally understandable that the public that we serve wants answers to these questions and access to their public lands, and I know that many of you have been asking these questions as well.

I'm sure you are all aware of the impact that the Cameron Peak Fire has had on our community and our National Forest lands. It should come as no surprise that the largest fire in Colorado history has also had a huge impact on our trail system. In fact, about 122 miles of trails were impacted by the fire, and

my top priority this year will be to stabilize that trail infrastructure. Many of those 122 miles cross through areas that have what we call "high or moderate soil burn severity." In other words, most if not all of the vegetation and root systems along these trail corridors has been lost. This can lead to heavy erosion causing a catastrophic loss of our trail infrastructure if we don't get crews in to stabilize these sections of trail.

So what do we need to do to get our trails open? We must implement critical trail stabilization treatments. These treatments will include building and maintaining drainage structures, re-benching and out-sloping tread, and building erosion control structures such as retaining walls. We also must remove bridges that have either been impacted by the fire directly or are in danger of being impacted by debris flow and flooding.



Burned bridges on the North Fork Trail

Finally, we must remove all of the hazard trees threatening designated campsites in our Wilderness Areas and

replace all of our directional signage that was destroyed. We'll accomplish this work with help from local youth conservation corps crews and volunteers like you.

*It should come as no surprise that the largest fire in Colorado history has also had a huge impact on our trail system.*

Many of these trails will possibly be closed to the public throughout the season, and we will need your help to implement these treatments to get them back open as soon as possible.

You can find up to date information about the Cameron Peak Fire Closure here: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/arp/alerts-notice/?aid=60887>.

Thanks again for all you do.

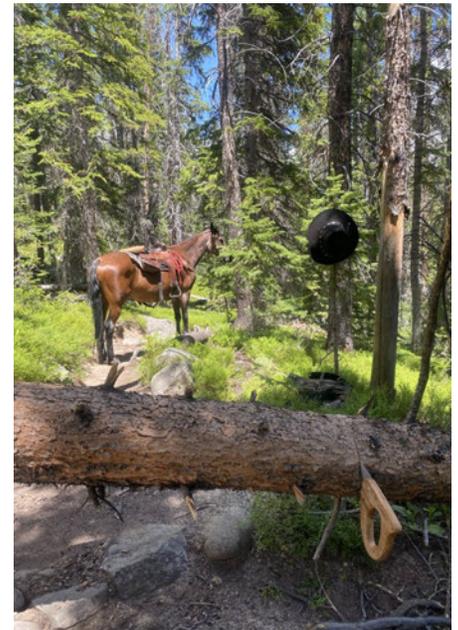
## Stock Challenge Course & Trail Work

By Fred Allen

With springtime comes thoughts of legging up the horses and getting shoes back on them. The stock patrol will have two new members this year. On May 15th, the annual Stock Challenge Course will be held for the first time on the North Fork Trail. This trail offers a great deal of variety in its first couple of miles. Some steep grade, a somewhat narrow stretch near the river while walking atop of gabions, a river crossing, a bridge crossing as well as a campsite and lots of folks using the trail will make for an interesting and fair evaluation. Any member who is riding a new horse this season is welcome to also ride.

The PWV Stock Committee has been working through the winter making plans on how we can help with all the trail rebuilding.

Co-chair Tim Van Donselaar and Stock Patrolling member Rich Cappello have been acquiring additional pack saddles and lashing gear. Tim has been working on training a couple of horses to be used exclusively for packing.



Rich Cappello's horse, Pewee, waiting while the downed tree is removed from the trail

With several trail crews being hired for the entire summer, the stock patrollers are making plans on how best to support the efforts. We are ready to pack in tents and other bulky items to help the crews set up camp miles up any trail. The stock committee also owns an outfitters type wall tent that can be packed on one horse and the frame packed on another. For any member who has experience around horses, there will be opportunities loading and leading horses up the trails. We envision helping out from time to time during the week as well as on weekends.

*The PWV Stock Committee has been working through the winter making plans on how we can help with all the trail rebuilding.*

The Stub Creek Ranger Station back area has been cleaned up. New Corrals were installed last season. The fencing has been repaired and there is now a clear path for horses to go for water in the creek. All members are welcome to come up and camp. It is a great spot to gain access into the Rawah Wilderness.

# New APP in town – COTREX, the Colorado Trail Explorer

By PWV Website



Colorado Parks & Wildlife & the Colorado DNR have teamed up to create a website and an app called COTREX

that is quite exciting! The intent of COTREX is to provide comprehensive, state-wide trail information. Although PWV has not confirmed 100% accuracy of the trails in our patrolling area, it can be an additional tool you might want to add to your trail exploration arsenal.

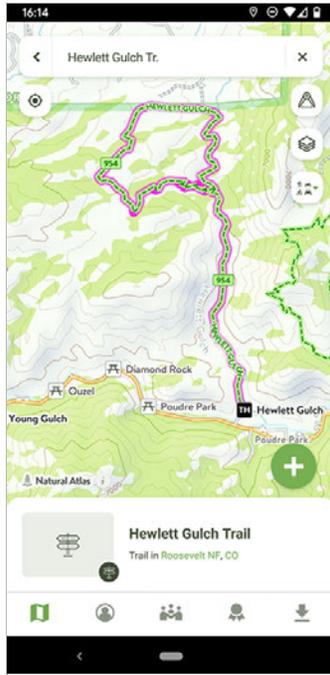
Currently, some of the highlights of the app include:

- COTREX has been in the making since 2017 and utilizes data from 230 land managers. COTREX is continuously updated with more features and capabilities.
- The COTREX website and app are free and you don't need an account, however creating an account lets you save and mark areas on routes you do. For example, if you find a nice campsite area on a trail, you can mark it and save it, or even a patch of weeds that you might want to alert the weed crew to.
- COTREX can be used offline with the ability to download maps to navigate trails when you don't have cell service.
- COTREX is for everyone – hikers, bikers, ATV riders, equestrian riders, wheelchair users and others. Trails are sortable by usage, difficulty, length, etc.

Here are resources to learn more about COTREX:

- Colorado Parks & Wildlife: <https://cpw.state.co.us/CTS/Pages/FAQs.aspx>
- COTREX website: <https://trails.colorado.gov/>

Download to smartphone free COTREX app View [COTREX Zoom Class](#) presented to PWV on 2/16/2021.



Screenshot from the COTREX app highlighting the Hewlett Gulch Trail.

## Support PWV

PWV thrives and prospers with support from people like you! For the past two decades, dedicated individuals have served the Poudre Wilderness Volunteers by providing countless hours patrolling and maintaining trails, educating users of the backcountry and wilderness areas of Northern Colorado, thus creating and preserving the legacy of these cherished areas for future generations.

*Your organization and others will be critical in helping us move forward with recreation infrastructure repairs.*

Donations to the Poudre Wilderness Volunteer and the Endowment Funds qualify as a tax deductible charitable donation. PWV is a 501 (c) (3) organization. *Note: When making a donation, you might want to explore whether your employer has a matching donations program.* [www.pwv.org/donate](http://www.pwv.org/donate)



PWV recognizes the generosity of sponsors and contributors.

Our success is enhanced by their participation:

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Special thanks to:

- **National Forest Foundation**
- **National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance**

## PWV on the Trail

