

Colorado Cave Survey Meeting
7:00 pm, Thursday, January 25, 2018
Home of Derek Bristol
7744 Gunsight Pass, Littleton, CO

Attendees (Grotto voting affiliation and officer votes in parentheses)

Derek Bristol

Kevin Manley (FRG) - (vote for Manley/Smith)

Jon Schow (CG) - (vote for Manley/Smith)

Jim Lawton (NCG) - (vote for Levy/Fowler)

Kristen Levy (NCG) - (vote for Levy/Fowler)

Carl Bern

David Gnuse

Donald Davis (SCMG) - (vote for Levy/Fowler)

Paul Fowler (FRG) - (vote for Levy/Fowler)

Carey Hunter (TG) - (vote for Levy/Fowler)

Ken Newton

Kathy Newton

Cole Newton (TG) - (vote for Manley/Smith)

Chris Carter

Barb Smith (CG) - (vote for Manley/Smith)

LP Lawrence

Layla Borgens (SCMG) - (vote for Manley/Smith)

Shiloh McCullum

Rob McFarland (CWSG) - (vote for Levy/Fowler)

Ken Headrick (CWSG) - (vote for Levy/Fowler)

Rick Rhinehart

Meeting Agenda and Minutes

USFS Region 2 –

Hubbard Cave Gate

No update

Spring Cave Gate

No update

Fixin' Cliff Climbing

Kristen Levy attended a meeting with the Eagle District of WRNF and the Access Fund to discuss concerns over rock climbing development on the Fixin' buttress. She will review this meeting and discuss next steps for the CCS.

Kristen gave an update on the meeting. This first meeting was mostly to have an open discussion on the status of climbing development and concerns. It was verified that the road out to the Fixin' buttress and associated undeveloped campsite are administratively closed. It is unclear whether the spur road off of Coffee Pot Road is

closed or not. There were dissenting opinions. It was generally agreed that cavers would be in favor of closing the road to make both climbing and caving access more difficult in order to possibly limit climbing visitation. It was also agreed that in future negotiations with the USFS and Access Fund/climbing community, that restricting climbing routes in or near cave entrances should be pursued and enforced, and that existing routes in or near cave entrances should be removed. It was also agreed that any trimming or removing of vegetation for climbing egress must stop. A follow-up meeting is expected to be scheduled within the next month.

Exception Permits on WRNF

From WRNF: "The White River National Forest continues to receive numerous overlapping requests for the same time periods for the same caves. In 2018 we are requesting CCS members to internally coordinate exception requests prior to submitting to the forest as the number of visitations during our closure period is not sustainable. We would like to reduce the number of exceptions during the critical swarming period and in the future will be more conservative in allowing exceptions for those activities that reasonably can occur outside of the closure periods. We value and will continue to respect and work in collaboration with CCS to ensure continued research, survey and monitoring activities."

The next Chair of the CCS will contact WRNF to clarify how they want this managed. It is unclear whether they want one single exception request for all cave visits during swarming season, or one request per cave, or ???

Upper Fryingpan Timber Harvest (including Lime Park)

From Jim Lawton:

A bat biologist from the Roaring Fork Valley contacted me about the timber sale particularly concerning zone 103 slated for clear cut where a bunch of caves are.

It turns out this is an old concern relating to already known caves in the Lime Park area that were long-ago taken into consideration when developing the timber harvest plan. CCS has had input into these decisions going back to ~2009. No additional action is needed.

Deep Creek Wild and Scenic Designation

Ken Neubecker plans to attend the meeting and will discuss the status.

Ken Neubecker was not able to attend the meeting, but Ken Newton gave a brief update. Plans are moving forward, but the main barrier at the moment seems to be opposition from aircraft that over-fly the canyon for training and other purposes. They want over-flight rights to be grandfathered into any new Wild and Scenic designation policy.

Hanging Lake Adaptive Management Plan

A new management plan for the Hanging Lake parking area and trailhead have

been proposed that would limit daily access, require a permit, impose a permit fee, and require use of a shuttle service to access the trail. There are a few small caves in the area, and the proposed changes should have little effect on the caves or cavers, but relatively little is known about the area. Following the lead of Rick Rhinehart, the following comments were made during the recent open comment period.

"There are several small caves in the area surrounding Hanging Lake, including Big Mouth Cave, Deer Cave, Slit Pit and Nowhere Cave. There are also other caves that have been reported in historical records but there has been no modern effort to relocate them. These caves are not often visited by the organized caving community, but they may have characteristics that would qualify them as "significant" under the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act of 1988. They may also be used as habitat for bats that are under threat from White Nose Syndrome. The proposed adaptive management plan for the Hanging Lake area should include permit exceptions for trips to these caves to inventory them and conduct bat use studies. It is suggested that the WRNF coordinate these activities with the Colorado Cave Survey, and include wildlife biologists from Colorado Parks and Wildlife. These trips should be approved as an exception to the proposed permit system and daily use limits should not apply."

LaSunder Cave Management Plan

Discuss renewed LaSunder Cave Management Plan and status of proposed changes.

From Kim Leitzinger:

"We have been able to find funding and have set up a Cooperative Agreement with Colorado State University to complete cultural surveys in the Deep Creek area this year. This is a requirement that the tribes asked for to see if we are missing any other cultural resources in that area to consider. They will not be completing surveys inside of the caves, but may want to complete surveys immediately surrounding the caves and at the entrances. They will also be looking at other areas and taking random survey samples.

In order to get these surveys done, I was thinking it would be best to work with the Colorado Cave Survey and see if there are some volunteers who would be able to show the CSU group where La Sunder is and other caves in Deep Creek on BLM that are accessible through hiking? These volunteers will be able to get reimbursement from the Colorado Grotto's BLM fund for their gas, lodging, etc.

If the Colorado Cave Survey has some members that can work with us, please send me contact information for the person who is willing to coordinate this effort. Thank you!"

It was agreed the Kevin Manley will continue to be the point of contact with Kim and the BLM on bat surveys and the Lower Deep Creek cultural survey work. Expenses for volunteers helping with these efforts can be reimbursed from a fund that is managed by Kevin through the Colorado Grotto. Talk to Kevin if you are interested in participating.

CCS Managed Caves

Groaning Cave

Discuss management plan renewal, reinstating annual reports, waiver management, etc.

The need for this was discussed briefly. The new CCS Chair will work with Kay Hopkins at WRNF on updating the plan, and perhaps reinstating annual reports. Modifications to the old plan would include:

- 1. Reducing trip size minimum to 2.*
- 2. Removing the general statement about not leaving anything in the cave due to conflicts with things such as the gate, fixed rigging, rescue caches and survey station markers.*
- 3. Remove the limitation on fixed ropes so that newly discovered areas, such as Paradox Dome, may remain rigged.*

LaSunder Cave

Discuss status of trips, waivers, conservation, etc.

From Stuart Marlatt:

There have actually been no visits to LaSunder last year. We had one planned trip (Coeli Velky, et al), but they ended up going to Groaning instead - so no one went into LaSunder in 2017. In 2016 we had 3 or 4 trips; I'll be assembling a 2016-2017 report for the BLM in the next month or so, and will send it around for review. I have all the paperwork for the 2016 trips, except for waivers from a trip by Wes Devenyns during the 2016 RM Regional. I've tried to contact Wes about these, but haven't had any success (and to be honest, it has been a long time since I tried). Ken Newton was going to try and chase Wes' formed down as well, since he was coordinating the trips during the Regional, but I don't know if he's had any success.

Fly and Marble Caves

Discuss status.

No update.

The access management team is:

Christine Kirkland (liability waiver coordinator) agnew200@yahoo.com

Talmage Trujillo talmagetrujillo@yahoo.com

Active Committee Reports

Clear Creek Canyon Project

Goal: Develop a relationship with Jefferson County Open Space regarding cave management, and promote exploration and conservation in Clear Creek Canyon.

Project members:

Kevin Manley (Chair)

kevin.manley@colorado.edu

Dan Castellari

cavesr4all@yahoo.com

Dave Lambert

cavelambert@gmail.com

Kevin Manley to provide an update.

There have been break-ins at CJs Crystal Cave and Jeffco Open Space was considering permanently sealing the cave. Chloe Beck (former CG Conservation Committee Chair) convinced them to consider constructing a new gate with some of the funding coming from the caving community. CG has a significant fund in place already and other grottos indicated an interest in also contributing.

Topics from the floor

1. *Discuss the state of information on the CCS website and how to keep it updated.*

This is badly needed. The new CCS Chair will work with Paul Ryan to get access to the hosting site, and Paul Fowler agreed to work on updating the information on the site.

2. *Sweetwater Ranch and Sweetwater Indian Cave ownership status.*

The Sweetwater Ranch and property including the cave is up for sale for several million. Only time will tell what this means for access.

3. *Ownership of Cave of the Clouds.*

It has been reported that Mike and Donna Frazier are under contract to buy ~45 acres north of I-70 that includes Cave of the Clouds. Their intention is to create a cave preserve and restore and gate the cave. They will be looking for help with these activities.

4. *Bill Yett maps - a donation to the CCS files.*

Bill Yett donated several large-format maps to the CCS files. Paul Fowler agreed to write him a letter of thanks on behalf of the CCS. A request for anyone with access to a large format scanner was made. There are a few large maps in the files, and these are the only remaining documents that have not been digitally archived due to the lack of a suitable scanner.

5. *BLM funds for bat support/research.*

There was a reminder that a fund exists and is being managed by Kevin Manley through the Colorado Grotto for work conducted in support of bat research on BLM land. Reimbursement for expenses including camping and miles driven is available.

6. *Red Canyon Grotto*

This grotto is no longer an official IO of the NSS due to inactivity. This means that there are now 6 grottos represented by the CCS, and a total of 12 voting members.

7. *Porcupine Cave*

It has been reported that the owner of Porcupine Cave may have passed away. It is unclear what this means for access. The cave has been officially closed for many years.

8. *Concern over YouTube videos about caves and caving. Below are the old and new cave location policy following a change made during the October, 2017 BOG meeting.*

Old NSS Cave Location Policy:

The NSS opposes, in general, specific wild cave locations in publications intended for the general public except where such publication better serves the interests of the Society.

New NSS Cave Location Policy:

The NSS opposes providing wild cave locations in publications, videos, postings, or information intended for the general public except where the presentation of such information better serves the mission of the Society.

Officer Elections

Two tickets for Chair and Vice Chair were voted upon. Ticket 1 was Kristen Levy (Chair) and Paul Fowler (Vice Chair). Ticket 2 was Kevin Manley (Chair) and Barb Smith (Vice Chair). The vote was close (see above), but the vote went to Kristen and Paul.

Next meeting

TBD

Officers of the Colorado Cave Survey

Chair	Kristen Levy	kblevy@comcast.net
Vice-Chair	Paul Fowler	pjfowler1@gmail.com

Voting Membership of the Colorado Cave Survey

(Please inform the Survey of any changes at your respective grottos.)

Colorado Grotto	Chair: Jon Schow	acojon@gmail.com
	Survey Rep: Barb Smith	smithbr@comcast.net
Front Range Grotto	President: Kevin Manley	kevin.manley@colorado.edu
	Survey Rep: Paul Fowler	pjfowler1@gmail.com
Northern Colorado Grotto	Chair: Kristen Levy	kblevy@comcast.net
	Survey Rep: Jim Lawton	quinoa@frii.com
Southern Colorado Mountain Grotto	Chair: Layla Borgens	nurse.layla@yahoo.com

Mountain Grotto	Sur. Rep: Christine Kirkland	agnew100@yahoo.com
Timberline Grotto	Chair: Cole Newton	cavekids@comcast.net
	Survey Rep: Carey Hunter	mushmc20@netzero.com
Colorado Western Slope Grotto	Chair: Ken Headrick	cavecritters@gmail.com
	Survey Rep: Rob McFarland	robmcfarland@me.com

Cave Survey Communication

The Colorado Cave Survey maintains an extensive website at:
www.coloradocavesurvey.org

A Google group is maintained for making announcements and discussing CCS business. An email sent to the group automatically goes out to everyone subscribed. For those interested, this is the best way to keep apprised of what is going on with the CCS. A person can unsubscribe without assistance whenever he or she wishes. To subscribe, please email the CCS Chair.