

Colorado Cave Survey Meeting

June 8, 2018

Cave of the Clouds / Defiance Cave Preserve, near Glenwood Springs, CO

Attendees:

Kristen Levy (NCG, CCS chair)
Layla Borgens (SCMG, CCS vice-chair + 2 proxies for SCMG)
Chris Carter (CG + 1 CG proxy)
Jim Lawton (NCG)
Kenny Headrick (CWSG)
Rob McFarland (CWSG)
Paul Fowler (FRG + 1 FRG proxy)
Ken Newton (1 TG proxy)

David Gnuse
Rick Rhinehart
Shiloh McCollum
Tracy White

*A quorum of voting members was present throughout the meeting.
Recent changes in chairs of SCMG and TG noted and recorded.*

Meeting Agenda

Previous minutes

Minutes from last CCS meeting, as previously published and distributed, formally accepted by voice acclamation vote.

USFS caves:

USFS Region 2 WNS response policies

On Friday April 5, Layla Borgens and Paul Fowler met with Rick Truex (Regional Wildlife Program Leader, USFS Region 2). His statement to us concerning any changes in USFS WNS response policy was: "We can expect to go into the 2019 season with the same 2018 rules and no imminent changes." Any specific implementation changes resulting from the change from Tier 1 response to Tier 2 response will be made by the individual Forests. However, they appear to be waiting for policy guidance from Rick at this point, and he has been away on another posting and then backlogged by other business since the government furlough. The current WNS implementation orders from the forests are due to expire at the end of this July. At that time they may be changed, or they may just be extended for 1-3 years subject to some possible future change.

Ken Newton: Ken talked with Kay Hopkins recently, who says tier 1 to tier 2 elevation in WNS management has nominally happened, but there have been no changes in on-the-ground implementation for WRNF at this time.

Upper Fryingpan timber harvest (including Lime Park)

Recommendations made by Jim Baichtal (Forest Geologist/Tongass National Forest) were accepted by the USFS though hard to find in the records. Parcel 103 was removed from the timber sale. Buffer zones of 100 feet were recommended in areas containing solutional collapse features and sinkholes and a 500 feet buffer zone was recommended for area containing a cave.

A lawsuit has been filed to stop the harvest by people living in the general area so work will be delayed for at least this summer.

Kristen Levy: This information is from a recent conversation with Kay Hopkins. Kay did not know about the lawsuit until she read it in the newspaper.

Jim Lawton: Cavers commented against this timber sale many years ago. These comments do not appear on line anymore. What happened? Also, people should know that the logging traffic is planned to go through Basalt, not Eagle.

Kristen Levy: Kay says CCS helped design the original sale, but the project has morphed through the years and changed names, so that may be what happened to old comments.

Fixin' cliff climbing

Discussions have begun for when a site visit will be scheduled. Attendees will be the USFS, CCS and climber representatives. No climbing zones will be delineated. The USFS considers gear left behind as 'abandoned property' and has directed climbers not to store gear at base of cliff or in caves. The road (and spur) is closed, and it is expected that all users will park on the main road and hike in. The road will be de-commissioned this summer. The sheep permittees will still be able to access the area via a different entry point that will be gated.

Kristen Levy: The site visit has been postponed because of the heavy snow in the area this year.

Ken Newton: Phil Nyland (WRNF) told him that Hadley Point climbing area defines gear left for more than 14 days as abandoned.

Kristen Levy: Gear on the wall is different from gear cached on the ground. Also Hadley is in a different ranger district, and they don't all do the rules the same.

Jim Lawton: He and Cyndi Mosch did an old biological inventory of the Fixin' area. They saw peregrines on the cliffs there.

Paul Fowler: Jennifer Prusse, a current WRNF biologist, knows about the peregrines there.

Exception permits on WRNF

A written request for a CCS/NSS exception permit for Groaning and Spring Caves will be submitted this summer. Last year, due to fires a request that was submitted in July, was not approved until September 20, 2018. It was valid until October 14, 2018. There was one trip to Groaning and one trip to Spring Cave under the exception permit in 2018.

No further discussion at meeting.

Spring Cave resurgence area fire line remediation

The Cabin Lake fire in 2018 burned much of the South Fork White River valley, closing the campground and blocking access to the Spring Cave area last fall. The fire did not reach the campground or cave, however. This year, Curtis Keetch, the Blanco district ranger, issued a closure order for Spring Cave pending further evaluation of possible impacts and remediation efforts. The order is nominally in effect until the end of 2019, but they have indicated to us their intention is to rescind it after peak snowmelt and runoff has subsided. It has been an exceptionally chilly and snowy spring so far. Kim Potter and Liz Roberts (USFS) have visited the cave area recently and report that there is still lots of snow, and high runoff in the Spring area has not yet begun. The South Fork Road (County road 10) is reportedly plowed to the campground now, though, and the campground is officially open. Two GeoCorps volunteers will be working at the cave again this summer. (Will follow-up)

Kenny Headrick: One of the GeoCorp Spring Cave volunteers has joined the CWSG mailing list.

Rick Rhinehart: Rick has talked with Curtis Keetch (Blanco district ranger) and Kay Hopkins about Spring Cave. They do not want climbers putting up routes in the cave or entrance area. They are also concerned about possible dangers from flooding events in the cave. There is a report that some cavers got stuck temporarily in the Butterscotch room area when waters rose in Thunder Road. The cave may overflow this year.

Paul Fowler: Forest Service has had cameras at Spring for bat monitoring. Dan Neubaum (CPW) reports that the bat population there appears to be stable.

Ken Newton: Camera monitoring at Hubbard's Cave also.

Chris Carter: And at Fulford too.

Deep Creek wild and scenic designation

Ken Newton will provide an update.

Ken Newton: The last full meeting was in 2018. The stakeholders adopted a code of conduct, and subcommittees were formed. The drafting committee has started work, but it moves slowly. The state of Colorado will retain some streamflow rights even though the federal government already does so themselves. The community outreach subcommittee is a place cavers can be involved. We can help draft the wording to be presented to legislatures, trying to convert different groups jargon into language the legislators can use. The target is to have actual legislation by 2023. Deep Creek Ranch owner did not believe they were being involved adequately, but American Rivers had in fact already been talking with their lawyers. All caves could end up with a common management plan across multiple agencies. Kenny Headrick and Bob Basset will stand in when Ken is not available. Bob has worked on W+SR plans in California previously.

Hanging Lake adaptive management plan

Permit process has been implemented. A permit to hike must be applied for and then transportation is provided from the town of Glenwood for a small fee.

Kristen Levy: Let the rangers know if you are going off trail to visit the small caves in the area. You still have to get a permit just like any other caves on WRNF.

Dave Gnuse and Chris Carter: The shuttle busses have a three hour window for return times. If you miss your return bus you can get standby on a later bus. Missing the last bus of the day could get you a \$250 fine if they have to return to get you.

BLM caves:

LaSunder Cave management plan

Previously from Kim Leitzinger (BLM):

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.

Information previously shared:

Last summer and fall, two groups of cavers led archaeologists to several caves in the Deep Creek Canyon as requested by the BLM.

July 21, 2018- Members of the CCS including Carl Bern, Donald Davis and Kristen Levy guided the CSU team into the Deep Creek Canyon and explored several caves on the southern wall. It was a successful trip; in that we found the caves thanks to Donald Davis. Archaeologists found some shards and a historic camp in surrounding areas but no signs of human usage in caves. September 29, 2018- Another trip was led by Randy Macon of the Northern Colorado Grotto. Report follows: We all hiked to LaSunder cave, leaving the parking lot around 9:30 and making it up to the cave around 12:30ish. Along the trail in the canyon, the archeologists found a 6,000-year-old atlatl dart point, which is called a "Mount Albion" type. They are found all over the Front Range but rarely on the western slope. It's hard to say why it was found where it was without more info. It could have been an ephemeral hunting episode, dropped or discarded tool, or washed in from somewhere else. But in the LaSunder cave entrance, they found nothing indicating Native American usage.

Update: May 22, 2019 Kim Leitzinger has just returned to her job in in Silt and is busy getting up to speed. She will talk with Brian Hopkins, the Recreational Planner and see what the results of the survey were. With the cultural survey finally being completed, we may be able to move forward with updating the LaSunder management plan. Received an update from Kim Leitzinger on May 30, 2019. Will share out at meeting.

Kristen Levy: Kim Leitzinger proposed some new ideas for a revised LaSunder management implementation. This would allow 10 caver trips per year, with a maximum of 5 people per trip. (It was not clear if this meant leader + 4 others, or leader + 5 others). If bat swarming is found there could be more limitations on trips. All paperwork would remain as it is now, but waivers must be submitted before trips because of some problems with lost or delayed paperwork in the past. We requested that 5 trips would be allowed to the back of the cave, which is currently off limits. BLM offered 4 trips to the back for photo monitoring and safety evaluation (mostly of ropes). That way they could do it without changing the existing regulations or paperwork much.

Kristen opened the floor for discussion of these proposals.

Paul Fowler: Relaying that Donald Davis asked for us to request permission to go past the rope in the back. Are the 4 trips to the back to be part of the overall quota of 10 total trips?

Tracy White: There has not been an overwhelming demand for LaSunder trips recently. Will

there be increased interest and more people wanting to go if the back is now available?

Chris Carter: Maybe we should allow no more than one trip to the back per grotto each year?

David Gnuse: Do trips to fix any rope problems discovered also count against the 10 total allowed trips?

Ken Newton: Motion to accept the general outlines of Kim's offer, with Kristen to work out the remaining details discussed here. Accepted by voice acclimation.

Twenty Pound Tick Cave

The BLM plans to inventory the cave this summer during a cave management meeting, though the meeting may not happen due to scheduling issues and funding. The CCS has volunteered any help needed including guides. I have been told that no management changes will be made until after the inventory. The CCS will be involved with any future management changes.

Carl Bern reports that the barrier that was installed is still in place and doesn't look like the rats have damaged it. It allows access yet stops most of the wind. He and Jeff Goben have surveyed to the Subway but don't plan on returning until the fall.

No further discussion at meeting.

CCS Managed Caves

Groaning Cave

The USFS has requested that a yearly summary of cave trips to Groaning be submitted. Paul Fowler submitted a summary of trips to Groaning for years 2017 and 2018. Jen Prusse, a USFS biologist, has requested that bat observations be recorded for future trips.

Mary Klaus, as Groaning Cave Access Coordinator, has agreed to write the yearly report as requested by the USFS. The report is due before Thanksgiving of each year.

A new register has been placed in Groaning Cave. Cavers are requested to fill out the register accurately with first and last names and other pertinent information since this information will be collected on a yearly basis and shared with the FS.

New Groaning management plan: No new updates.

The need for an updated management plan has been discussed with the WRNF. It will probably end up looking more like the LaSunder management plan. Kay Hopkins has not sent out templates to the Survey for input. Follow-up when possible.

No further discussion at meeting.

LaSunder Cave

Stuart Marlatt and Carl Bern are the access coordinators for LaSunder Cave.

Stuart submits the yearly reports. There are no updates to report currently.

Reminder: Waivers are required in advance of trips due to late submission in the past.

See discussion about LaSunder above. No further discussion at meeting.

Fly and Marble Caves

Report submitted by Christine Kirkland

No new or exciting updates. Just a few reminders. Christine Kirkland and Talmage Trujillo are cave access coordinators, so let either of them know if you would like to visit the caves. In order to visit the caves, you must have been to the caves before with a qualified trip leader and be knowledgeable about the caves and rules before being granted permission to lead a trip on your own. The permit will be granted at the discretion of the access coordinators. If you lead a trip, you are responsible for ensuring all individuals on the trip read the rules and regulations. Waivers must be submitted to Christine or Talmage either in person, by mail, or by email before being allowed in the caves or receiving combinations to the gates. Combinations to the gates are changed frequently. Our priority is to have a continued good relationship with the property owners.
Take pictures and leave nothing but footprints please.

At a previous meeting, Talmadge Trujillo had proposed the idea that he and his students would build some bat houses and gift them to Larry Blackwell. We believe this has occurred. Thank you, Talmadge and students.

The access management team is:

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

Talmage Trujillo ttrujillo@salidaschools.org

Kristen Levy: Added that the owners have requested no smoking or drinking, even at the parking area.

Active Committee Reports

Bat Working Groups

Mountain Prairie WNS Coordination Calls:

Donna Frazier has taken over attending the phone meetings and Christine Kirkland is a backup for when Donna cannot attend. They will coordinate with each other and submit reports to be shared.

No further discussion at meeting.

Colorado WNS Working Group

Paul Fowler attends the Colorado interagency WNS working group phone conferences chaired by CPW. The main item to report from there is that despite considerable testing in the last year, there are still no positive Pd or WNS results for Colorado.

No further discussion at meeting.

Mid-Continent Quarry Proposal

Rick Rhinehart will give a brief summary of events up to most recent development. Kim Leitzinger has been given responsibility for coordinating the RMR Quarry project. She will be talking with Rick Rhinehart who represents the CCS in this issue having in depth knowledge and physical proximity of the area. There are at least two known caves in the area, Fountainhead Cave, discovered in 1985 and Surprise Pit which has been known of since the 1920's. Ridge

walkers led by Rick Rhinehart had noted openings in the surrounding cliffs, but further exploration is needed. If there are vertically skilled people who would like to assist in this project, let me/Kristen know.

Rick Rhinehart: Mid Continent (RMR) has hired the Denver lawyer / lobby firm Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck to represent them. The current Secretary of Interior, David Bernhardt, used to work for them. People are worried about the apparent conflict of interest, and about undue influence. Garfield County has sued on non-compliance with the current quarry permit. There will be a caver trip in July to the area to help influence BLM in assessing the karst resources in the area of the quarry and possible impacts. The second RMR proposal states that there are no caves at all in the area. One way or another, this proposal is likely to end up in further lawsuits. Ken Newton: the Glenwood Citizens Alliance wants more supporting letters to help with their opposition to the quarry expansion. Timberline Grotto has written one.

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.

Shannon Glazer has provided an update. Shannon had written a petition, collected multiple signatures from grottos and sent it in to Jefferson County regarding a new gate to be payed for in part by grottos of Colorado. The proposal was rejected. However, she has been assured by 'high ranking' park rangers for the Jefferson County Parks that there are no plans to completely seal off CJs since the improved lock and trail camera have successfully prevented further break-ins. (Since October 2017) Shannon applied for a research permit to continue data logging and it was approved. As part of this grant, a yearly report must be submitted including temperature and evaporimeter data. Shannon is also looking for background history as to why and when data logging was instigated at CJs. Please email Shannon at Shannon.glazer@gmail.com if you know any of the history.

Project members:

Shannon Glazer	mock5turtle@hotmail.com
Dan Castellari	cavesr4all@yahoo.com
Dave Lambert	cavelambert@gmail.com

Kristen Levy: No major new breaking information. Shannon Glazer had a proposal to do data logging that got approved. She is looking for more information on the history of CJs. She is open to more cavers going on monitoring trips to CJs.

Cave of the Winds- Bat Appreciation Day-Christine Kirkland

Bat Appreciation Day was a success. Dave Jackson had the CaveSim trailer, there was a vertical tower, and a kid's craft table. Bat rehabilitators Kathy Estes and Donna Frazier had a booth with information, Colorado Parks and Wildlife had a booth with information, and Jenn Zedalis and her daughter dressed up in an elaborate bat costume and delighted kids and adults! Cave of the Winds seemed quite happy with the event. Will this be a yearly occurrence?

Kristen Levy: Questions have been raised about the scope of Cave of the Winds rules restricting posting on social media. Does this apply to pictures from main commercial areas too? Would

this include pictures from Bat Appreciation day? No one seemed sure, so we need to check on this.

CCS website

Paul has agreed to continue to update the website. Additional volunteers with relevant experience and skills would be greatly appreciated. Site fees are paid through May 2020.

No further discussion at meeting.

Topics from the floor

Rocky Mountain Regional Information

Ken and Cole Newton

Ken Newton: Last year's regional was in Logan Utah. Jason Weyland is the new RMR chair. He asked whether Colorado was feasible for a 2019 regional. Ken is working on that. The biggest question appears to be the Forest Service permit process and whether we need such a permit.

Rick Rhinehart: Over some limited group size, yes, you do need a camping permit from the Forest Service if you are on their land. The largest problem historically has been providing the porta-potties they require. The process takes time, so it is important to apply soon.

Ken Newton: Is Fulford campground feasible? Is it run by Eagle county now?

Rick Rhinehart: A loop at the Yoeman campground might be more feasible, and has been used for a regional previously.

Ken Newton: August 10 might be a tentative date. Kay Cochran can do T shirt design, but they need someone who knows about printing and producing them. Also need ideas on a guidebook. The budget is not yet known, either.

Cave of the Clouds and Drapery Den

Defiance Cave Preserve- Mike Frazier/Donna Frazier

There will be regular trips this summer to Drapery Den and assistance is needed in cleaning up the cave. The homeless guy was/is still living there even though he was given eviction notices. Volunteers removed enough trash that the floor of the cave can now be seen. Please talk to your grottos and help to coordinate some efforts to help clean up this cave. The hope is that if the cave is clean, then the bats may return.

Cavers are also welcome to their own project on the property. Graffiti removal, digs, Archaeology, historical signature studies and more are all possible ideas. The preserve will remain open to cavers despite the possibility of a closure order from the BLM and USFS.

No further discussion at meeting. Several CCS meeting attendees went to do cleanup work at Drapery Den after the meeting.

Rocky Mountain Caving

Update from Rick Rhinehart

RMC requested digital files of past RMC journals. It was approved and now all RMC journals are available for a small fee digitally.

No further discussion at meeting.

New Business

1. A request has been made to ask about caver access to Hubbard's Cave. Follow-up needed.

Rob McFarland: Rick Truex had said that future caver access might be possible back when the gate was installed.

Rick Rhinehart: Phil Nyland had also said maybe.

Ken Newton: Phil Nyland had said they wanted to wait and have a trial period first after the gate was built. He also said there was a big bat count this fall at Hubbard's

2. Open discussion on unscheduled question raised from floor:

Kristen Levy: Is it fair that when there are contested elections for CCS officers, there may be people voting in multiple grottos for what to recommend to their representatives?

Chris Carter: Maybe ask people who want to run to announce early and put out statements of why they are running, so that grottos have time for better discussion?

Ken Newton: Maybe Kristen can publicly request something like 2 months lead time before elections?

Paul Fowler: CCS by-laws don't really have anything allowing CCS itself to tell grottos how to run internal selection or voting process.

(Someone else, not recorded who): Do we need to think about updating CCS bylaws?

Paul Fowler: Volunteered to put a link to the bylaws out on the CCS mailing list and ask in general for any update suggestions.

3. Code of Conduct/Anti-harassment Policy Adoption

Kristen Levy: The NSS BOG says that internal organizations of the NSS have to implement anti-harassment policies. It doesn't really specify what actions a local organization should take, though. We wanted to try to have our own more specific policy statement in addition to the national one, that also made clearer what steps we could take to handle any problems that might arise.

Paul Fowler: Handed out updated draft of proposed CCS policy. Also NSS anti-harassment policy statement from last BOG meeting for reference. Moved to accept proposed CCS code after appropriate discussion and amendment.

Chris Carter: Motion to strike word "Attacks" in third sentence of third paragraph and replace by "Comments". Amending motion accepted by voice acclamation of voting members present.

Chris Carter: Motion to strike wording "prior notification" from last sentence of the fifth paragraph, and in the same sentence to change wording "by unanimous approval of the voting members of CCS" to "of those present at the meeting". Amending motion accepted by voice acclamation of voting members present.

Ken Newton: If someone, especially a voting representative, does cause a significant problem at a CCS meeting, how do we inform their grotto?

Paul Fowler: Maybe that would be a good use of what the code lists as a "letter of censure" if really needed?

Motion to accept the CCS Code of conduct and anti-harassment policy as amended was then approved by a 9-1 vote of representatives and proxies.

Meeting adjourned.

2019 Officers of the Colorado Cave Survey

Chair Kristen Levy kblevy@comcast.net
Vice-Chair Layla Borgens nurse.layla@yahoo.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: Chris Carter	ccarterskis@yahoo.com
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: Dustin St. Germaine	varikdragonking@gmail.com
	Rep: Christine Kirkland	agne200@yahoo.com
Timberline Grotto	Chair: Kay Cochran	wyrdstudio@yahoo.com
	Survey Rep: Carey Hunter	mushmc20@netzero.com
Colorado Western Slope Grotto	Chair: Ken Headrick	cavecritters@gmail.com
	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.