

Colorado Cave Survey Meeting
7 pm, Monday, January 25, 2010
Home of Carl and Amy Bern, Golden, CO

Meeting Agenda

White Nose Syndrome

Colorado and the west are bracing for the arrival of White Nose Syndrome, a disease that has killed over one million bats in the eastern U.S. over the last several years. Transport of fungal spores associated with the disease makes caving gear a potential vector. The spread of WNS to Colorado could impact recreational caving through cave closures. Spread of WNS is of great concern in the context of the 2011 NSS convention in Glenwood Springs.

CCS Chairman Carl Bern and Vice-Chair David Lambert have been participating in monthly conference calls about planning for WNS in Colorado. Those calls have been coordinated by Kirk Navo from the Colorado Division of Wildlife and have included representatives from a range of federal and state agencies. As WNS has not yet reached Colorado, the discussions have focused on how to raise awareness, monitor for its arrival, and actions taken at the state and national level by agencies within the outbreak zone.

Although relatively little is known about the disease, research is providing new information on almost a weekly basis. Notably, WNS has now been confirmed in France.

Center for Biological Diversity: Petitions Filed to Close Caves Nationwide

The CBD, an endangered species advocacy group, has filed two petitions with the federal government. One asks that two new species of bat receive protection under the Endangered Species Act. The second calls for a closure of caves on public land nationwide and regulations banning travel between caves. Naturally the caving community is in an uproar over the second petition. Many in the NSS are already characterizing it as ill-conceived, not supported by science, and likely to do more damage than good. The CCS and cavers in Colorado may want to consider helping efforts to fight the proposal.

***Discussion:** The CCS will continue to participate in the monthly conference calls, coordinated by Kirk Navo. At this time, Kirk Navo does not believe there is much validity to the petitions, but the CCS will continue to monitor the situation.*

White River National Forest

Kay Hopkins has replaced Rich Doak as the Caves Program Coordinator for the WRNF. The CCS formed a strong relationship with Kay during her time with the BLM. Kay has invited the CCS to participate in a meeting with WRNF employees concerning planning for arrival of WNS in Colorado and the 2011 NSS Convention.

***Discussion:** CCS Chairman Carl Bern and Vice-Chair Dave Lambert participated in a conference call for the WRNF Cave & Karst Program Meeting, coordinated by Kay Hopkins. The WRNF was interested in just how many cavers would be visiting which caves during the NSS 2011 convention and how the cavers will manage*

such traffic. Suggestions were made by the WRNF concerning the location of WNS decontamination stations and also some sort of certification for attendees to show that their gear had been decontaminated prior to wild cave trips.

Burnt Mountain Timber Sale

The WRNF is proposing a timber sale for the Burnt Mtn area. The CCS responded to a scoping letter asking for public comment on the proposed sale and indicated that there were a number of caves that could be negatively affected by timbering operations. The WRNF indicated that some boundaries of the sale could be moved or buffer zones created around caves and cave features. Based on that understanding the CCS passed along the location of some caves and cave features to the WRNF. Planning for the timber sale is still in progress.

***Discussion:** The CCS will continue to work with the WRNF to reduce the risks to caves and cave features in this area.*

2011 National Speleological Society Convention

The 2011 NSS Convention will be held in Glenwood Springs. The CCS is coordinating between the convention planning committee and the FS and BLM on managing and monitoring effects of convention traffic in wild caves on public land. The WRNF is interested in estimates of how many convention cavers will be visiting which caves. Skip Withrow and Carl Bern are in charge of organizing cave trips for the 2011 Convention. It might be useful to designate them as a CCS committee for this task.

***Discussion / Action:** A committee, currently consisting of Skip Withrow and Carl Bern, was formed to coordinate between the NSS convention planning committee and the FS and BLM. Skip and Carl are already tasked with coordinating caving trips for the convention. This committee will last through the NSS 2011 convention or until determined no longer needed. Motion was made by Stuart Marlatt with a second from Rick Speaect.*

Queen's Canyon Cave

After the last CCS meeting Daniel Laos agreed to talk to the Navigators about establishing a point of contact and procedures for cavers to visit caves on their property. We might have an update from either Daniel or Mike Frazier.

***Discussion:** No updates were available at the time of the meeting.*

Fly and Marble Caves

Fly and Marble Caves were closed twice this past fall at the request of the landowner. First, it came to light that the CCS was not receiving signed liability waivers from all trip participants. The landowner is very concerned about liability and without the

waivers he would probably be denying cavers access. The second closure occurred when it was discovered that someone was advertising trips at a local climbing gym and charging money for them. Charging money increases liability for trip leader and landowner.

The caves are now open again. After a lot of hard work the liability waiver, management plan, and team of cavers coordinating access has been revamped. New information is on the CCS website. Cavers are reminded not to take the good graces of land owners or land managers for granted.

***Discussion:** We are privileged to have access to these caves. Let's all be responsible cavers and follow the rules, found on the CCS web site.*

Wind Power Development in northeast Colorado

Jim Lawton received an inquiry from a consulting company connected to potential wind power facility in Washington County Colorado. Information is being sought on cave resources in the area, particularly as related to bat populations.

***Discussion / Action:** No cave resources are known in this area. Jim Lawton will follow up with the consulting company.*

CavesR4all Website

Dan Castellari acknowledges that the cavesr4all website does not reflect his current opinions about the organized caving community in Colorado and gives negative impressions to new cavers. Changes are planned for the website as early as February of this year.

***Discussion / Action:** Dan Castellari plans to put more emphasis on the CavesR4all website regarding the Colorado Cave Survey and the state's grottos. He hopes to have this complete by mid-February but if he is unable to meet this deadline, he will pull the website until this information is complete.*

CCS Managed-Access Caves

Groaning Cave

The Groaning waiver list continues to be maintained by Jim Wilson (jwkayman@earthlink.net). It is important to make sure that liability waivers get delivered to Jim in a timely manner. You can mail paper copies of waivers to Jim at:
2944 Colgate Dr.
Longmont, CO 80503-2203

***Discussion / Action:** Larry Fish has asked to retire from his duty as keeper of old registers and visitation report creator. Mary Klaus, Colorado Grotto greeter, has volunteered for this responsibility. CCS Chairperson, Dave Lambert, will work with both Larry and Mary to make sure this is a smooth transition.*

LaSunder Cave

The report for 2009 is due to the BLM. No problems were reported, other than some cavers being surprised by the strenuous approach to the cave.

***Discussion / Action:** Stuart Marlatt plans to have the LaSunder cave report complete by mid-February. The report will be submitted to Kay Hopkins, WRNF, until someone for the BLM can be appointed.*

Fly and Marble Caves

The caves were closed in August of last year, re-opened temporarily, and then closed again in October. The closures were caused by cavers not following access protocols and some commercial trips being run in the caves. Through hard work by the CCS, access management has now been re-vamped in coordination with the landowner and the caves have re-opened! Access information is available on the CCS website. The access management team is:

Rick Rhinehart (liability waiver coordinator)
Jason Conner
Jonny Slumpff

nss@rockymountaincaving.com
jason@caving101.com
jonny@answergurus.com

Reports from active committees and projects of the CCS

Clear Creek Canyon Project

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

Project members:

Andrea Croskrey (chair)	quartzite13@hotmail.com
Dan Castellari	cavesr4all@yahoo.com
Dave Lambert	dlambert@ngs.org

***Discussion:** The Colorado Grotto has planned the 4th annual Earth Day / Fault Cave Cleanup for Saturday, April 24th. Stuart Marlatt's son is also working on his Eagle Scout project regarding graffiti removal for Fault Cave. A coordinated effort may be initiated.*

Cave Information System Committee

Goal: Plan a system for creating a comprehensive, centralized repository of cave and karst data for Colorado which will be actively supported and maintained for the foreseeable future. The database would be intended to promote preservation of cave and karst resources and to encourage science, exploration, and recreation.

Planning for the CIS has been going well. Cavers can learn the latest from materials at http://www.coloradocavesurvey.org/CCS_CIS.html. An article on the topic appeared in the Winter 2009 RMC, and grotto programs are planned for later this year.

Committee members:

Carl Bern (Chair)	cbern5@juno.com
Stuart Marlatt	Stuart_Marlatt@comcast.net
Marty Morey	skiandcave@gmail.com
Steve Reames	spreames@diskdrive.com
Dave Gribble	gribble@vcn.com

***Discussion:** Progress is being made. Carl Bern plans to meet with each grotto individually this summer to discuss this system.*

Topics from the floor

***Topic 1:** The next Colorado Cave Rescue Network exercise will be April 10th. Registration is open and available via the CCRN web site.*

***Topic 2:** Frank Leskinen hopes to contact the wife of Gene Dover in regards to Gene's cave files and perhaps location of Tortuga Cave.*

Elections

Carl Bern is restricted from serving as Chairman in 2010 due to term limits. David Lambert has expressed interest in serving as Chairman with Carl Bern serving as Vice-Chair.

***Discussion / Action:** Dave Lambert was voted as Chair and Carl Bern was voted as Vice Chair. Motion was made by Jim Lawton with a second by Rick Speaect.*

Next meeting

***Discussion:** Next meeting perhaps in May. An announcement will be made one month prior.*

Officers of the Colorado Cave Survey

Chair Carl Bern cbern5@juno.com
Vice-Chair David Lambert cavelambert@gmail.com

Voting Membership of the Colorado Cave Survey

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

Colorado Grotto	Chair: Rick Speaect	rick@perryandterry.com
	Survey Rep: Stuart Marlatt	Stuart_Marlatt@comcast.net
Front Range Grotto	President: Dave Schmitz	dschmitz007@yahoo.com
	Survey Rep: David Lambert	dlambert@ngs.org
Northern Colorado Grotto	Chair: Frank Leskinen	fleskinen@wmconnect.com
	Survey Rep: Jim Lawton	quinoa@verinet.com
Southern Colorado Mountain Grotto	Chair: Todd Warren	twcaver@yahoo.com
	Survey Rep: Mike Frazier	Frazier22@msn.com
Timberline Grotto	Chair: Clair Jacoby	mariajacoby@aol.com
	Survey Rep: Carey Hunter	mushmc20@netzero.com
Western Slope Grotto	Chair: Tonya LeMoine	cavertonya@gmail.com
	Survey Rep: Dan Castellari	CavesR4All@yahoo.com
Red Canyon Grotto	Chair: Jason Conner	jason@caving101.com
	Survey Rep: Ken Dageforede	kadag10@juno.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 cbern5@juno.com.