

Colorado Cave Survey Meeting  
7:30pm May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008  
Home of Carl and Amy Bern, Lakewood

### **Meeting Agenda**

#### **Yahoo or Google group for the CCS**

Distributing information and having email discussions of CCS business would be facilitated by starting a Yahoo or Google group. CCS members and interested cavers could sign up to be part of the group. Emails sent to the group would immediately be distributed to all. One of these groups will be started in the next month. CCS members will be strongly encouraged to sign up.

Action decided: Start Google group. As of 5/18/08 the group had been formed. Email [cbern5@juno.com](mailto:cbern5@juno.com) to join.

#### **Cave Information System Committee report**

The CIS committee met again in March. Incorporating local (district or county) coordinators into the system was discussed. Attempts were made to refine the classification system for sensitivity of data. A report is available in electronic and hard copy, email [cbern5@juno.com](mailto:cbern5@juno.com) to obtain.

Discussion: General support for the progress thus far. Suggestions were made for additional outreach at grottos and the Rocky Mountain Speleo-Seminar. Those plans were/are already in progress. Also see below.

#### **Possible sharing of cave locations with Search and Rescue (SAR) Groups**

Following the recovery of a deceased homeless man in a cave outside of Glenwood Springs, members of the Garfield County SAR board approached the caving community about obtaining a list of cave locations in their jurisdiction. A second request has just come in (May 15<sup>th</sup>) from Park County SAR, who are looking for a possible suicide that may have taken place in a cave or mine.

Requests such as these seem quite reasonable, but they have a myriad of implications and potential repercussions. The Colorado Cave Rescue Network (CCRN) is in the process of building relationships with state SAR groups. Generally, SAR groups are more than happy to hand over cave operations to cavers and the CCRN, so the risk of non-cavers taking over cave rescue seems to be a non-issue. Park County SAR also seems to understand the sensitive nature of cave location data, and has made promises to properly secure any data shared. However, it seems prudent to assume that any data shared with SAR groups will eventually leak out.

A course of action somewhere between non-cooperation and sharing every cave location in a county might be best.

Action/Discussion: It was decided that the newly rejuvenated Colorado Cave Rescue Network (CCRN) headed by Marty Morey was better equipped to be a liaison between

the caving community and SAR groups than the CCS. The CCS and CCRN will need to work out an agreement on how to handle cave location data during rescue situations. That will be discussed at the next meeting of the Cave Information System committee

### **White Nose Syndrome (WNS)**

WNS is a poorly understood disease that is inflicting significant mortalities on cave roosting bats in the northeastern US. Caves are being closed until the disease and the vector spreading the disease is better understood. Cavers and land managers in Colorado are aware of the situation, but to date there is no evidence of WNS in caves west of the Mississippi. If WNS is discovered in the west, land managers and owners may consider temporarily closing caves. No action planned.

Discussion/Action: Cyndi Mosch briefed the group on the current understanding of WNS. Cavers observing dead bats can report them as possible WNS victims via a website.

### **Salvage logging north of Vail**

The Forest Service contacted the CCS to ask if there were caves that could potentially be impacted by logging in beetle killed areas north of Vail. Black Timber Cave is nearby, but outside the logging zone. The FS was advised of its location.

### **Guided Caving Service**

Colorado Guided Underground Adventures, operated out of Glenwood Springs by Tom Smyth, was served a cease and desist letter by the Forest Service for not having a permit to operate on public lands. It is not known whether Tom plans to seek formal permission to lead guided cave trips into wild caves on public lands in the future.

Discussion: Someone had heard that the number of visitors on special use permits for outfitter guided trips into Fulford was going up. An inquiry to the WRNF is being made.

### **Elephant Mountain Mines/Caves**

The Forest Service, in cooperation with unpatented mining claim holder Robert Congdon, is preparing to gate the lower and middle adits of the mines on Elephant Mountain. The gates will help protect Townsend's big eared bats that use those mines. The CCS provided some feedback on the gate designs. The gates are being paid for by a state of Colorado mine closure program.

Discussion: The understanding was that only the lower and middle adits were going to have bat friendly gates installed. The recent RMC reported that the upper adit was to be gated.

### **Memorandum of Understanding with the Forest Service**

Rich Doak of the FS has been unable to find time to work on the MOU, but they remain committed to a cooperative relationship with the CCS.

Discussion: Jim Lawton and Carey Hunter requested copies of the draft MOU. Although we currently have a good working relationship with the WRNF, the CCS needs to press the WRNF to move forward on the MOU.

### **CCS Website**

We seem to need new hosting or a mirror site. Updating the website has become an issue due to limited access and difficulty contacting Tom Dawson.

Action decided: Stuart Marlatt and Johnny Slumpff are going to register a domain name and move hosting. The minimal funding for the site will be assembled by either passing the hat or requests to the grottos when we know the cost.

### **Committee/Project Reports**

See list of committees/projects below.

### **CCS Managed-Access Caves**

#### Groaning Cave

Preparations are underway for the upcoming season. Tonya LeMoine intends to remark some key survey stations along the trade routes. Combo changes will be conducted as last year, with lock pickup/drop-off at Dennis Laird's house.

#### LaSunder Cave

Two trips are planned by the Timberline Grotto on Memorial Day. A CG trip is planned for June.

#### Fly and Marble Caves

Reports of visitation remain high. Is the landowner still happy and what is the status of impacts on the parking area?

Discussion: No one present to report on Fly and Marble.

### **Topics from the floor?**

### Officers of the Colorado Cave Survey

|            |                |  |
|------------|----------------|--|
| Chair      | Carl Bern      | <a href="mailto:cbern5@juno.com">cbern5@juno.com</a>                       |
| Vice-Chair | Stuart Marlatt | <a href="mailto:Stuart_Marlatt@comcast.net">Stuart_Marlatt@comcast.net</a> |

### 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. New caves are being found and mapped. A proposal has been submitted to resurvey CJ's Cavern.

Project members:

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Andrea Croskrey (co-chair) | <a href="mailto:quartzite13@hotmail.com">quartzite13@hotmail.com</a> |
| Dan Castellari (co-chair)  | <a href="mailto:cavesr4all@yahoo.com">cavesr4all@yahoo.com</a>       |
| Dave Lambert               | <a href="mailto:dlambert@ngs.org">dlambert@ngs.org</a>               |

#### Elephant Mountain Mines/Caves Bat Gate Advisory Committee

Goal: Monitor progress and advise as necessary as a bat gate is installed to protect Townsend's Big Eared bats.

Committee members:

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Fred Luiszer (chair) | <a href="mailto:luiszer@spot.colorado.edu">luiszer@spot.colorado.edu</a> |
|----------------------|--|

#### 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. Support for the database would be encouraged by ensuring protection for sensitive information while providing reasonable access to non-sensitive data. Planning will be a multi-year project, and the system will have to be voted into existence by the CCS before becoming active.

Committee members:

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Carl Bern (Chair) | <a href="mailto:cbern5@juno.com">cbern5@juno.com</a>                       |
| Stuart Marlatt    | <a href="mailto:Stuart_Marlatt@comcast.net">Stuart_Marlatt@comcast.net</a> |
| Marty Morey       | <a href="mailto:skiandcave@gmail.com">skiandcave@gmail.com</a>             |
| Steve Reames      | <a href="mailto:spreames@diskdrive.com">spreames@diskdrive.com</a>         |
| Donna Rene        | <a href="mailto:cavefish@fastmail.fm">cavefish@fastmail.fm</a>             |

#### Steamboat Sulfur Cave Project

No longer a CCS project?

Project members: Rick Rhinehart, Fred Luiszer, Mike Frazier

Action: No longer an official CCS project, continues as independent collaboration.

#### Dinosaur National Monument Caves Project

Project still active?

Project members: Rick Rhinehart, Donald Davis

Action: No longer an official CCS project. Can be reconstituted at a future CCS meeting if necessary.

### Current membership of the CCS

|                                   |                            |  |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Colorado Grotto                   | Chair: Rick Speact         | rick@perryandterry.com   |
|                                   | Survey Rep: Stuart Marlatt | Stuart_Marlatt@comcast.net                                     |
| Front Range Grotto                | Chair: Carl Bern           | cbern5@juno.com  |
|                                   | Survey Rep: Dan Bryce      | dbryce@HPD-online.com  |
| Northern Colorado Grotto          | Chair: Frank Leskinen      | fleskinen@wmconnect.com  |
|                                   | Survey Rep: Jim Lawton     | quinoa@verinet.com   |
| Southern Colorado Mountain Grotto | Chair: Jonny Slumpff       | jonny@answergurus.com  |
|                                   | Survey Rep: Jerry Elliot   | jkelliott12@msn.com  |
| Timberline Grotto                 | Chair: Ken Newton          | knewton@rfsd.k12.co.us   |
|                                   | Survey Rep: Carey Hunter   | mushmnc20@netzero.com  |
| Western Slope Grotto              | Chair: Harry Segelken      | decicarson@aol.com   |
|                                   | Survey Rep: Dan Castellari | <a href="mailto:CavesR4All@yahoo.com">CavesR4All@yahoo.com</a> |
| Red Canyon Grotto                 | Chair: Jason Conner        | <a href="mailto:rcg@caving101.com">rcg@caving101.com?</a>      |
|                                   | Survey Rep: ?              |  |