

Welcome aboard the NWF Express!

The purpose of this bus tour is to provide you an opportunity to see some of the Colorado landscape and become familiar with several of the issues that are currently facing wildlife and wildlife habitat in the West. On this trip you will see and hear about several issues including:

- Mountain Pine Beetle
- Global Warming
- Hardrock Mining – 1872 Mining Act
- Oil and Gas Development
- Habitat Fragmentation / Wildlife Corridors
- Western Water issues

The tour as planned will include five stops that will give a chance to hear about these issues from an excellent group of guides that have been working on these issues for many years. The guides include:

NWF – Rocky Mountain Natural Resource Center

- **Steve Torbit**, Regional Executive Director. Steve is a wildlife biologist and native Coloradan. He has worked for the Colorado Division of Wildlife, Wyoming Game & Fish Department, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. For the past 15 years he has used his extensive knowledge to further NWF's mission in wildlife conservation.
- **Kate Zimmerman**, Senior Land Stewardship Policy Specialist. Kate has an extensive career in conservation. After graduating from Yale Law School, she was a public lands attorney in the Washington, D.C office of NWF. She then moved to Colorado to become Director of the Public Lands Program at the Land and Water Fund of the Rockies (now Western Resource Advocates). Kate rejoined NWF in 2003 and continues to work on public lands issues in the West.

- **Bill Dvorak**, Public Lands Community Organizer. Bill has spent many years floating and fishing the Arkansas River. Bill is currently organizing sportsmen to advocate for sensible energy development in Colorado.
- **Dyanne Singler**, Land Stewardship Manager. Dyanne is a wildlife biologist and has worked on issues facing a diversity of species including wolves, Florida panthers, Mountain gorillas and a variety of bird species. Dyanne is currently working on the Sportsmen United for Sensible Mining campaign.

NWF – Northern Rockies Natural Resource Center

- **Land Tawney**, Senior Manager, Sportsmen United for Sensible Mining and Regional Representative for Montana. Land is a 5th generation Montanan. He has extensive grassroots organizing experience and a great passion for the conservation of wildlife. Land is currently leading NWF's efforts to reform the 1872 Mining Act.

Colorado Wildlife Federation

- **Dennis Buechler**, Director Emeritus. Dennis was instrumental in the development of the Wildlife Management Guidelines for Oil and Gas Development in Colorado and the subsequent Colorado Habitat Stewardship Act of 2007, which were endorsed by 70 citizen groups. He has volunteered with CWF since 1989 and is a recipient of NWF's Charlie Shaw Conservation Partnership award. He is retired from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and currently serves on the Colorado Wildlife Commission.

Stop 1: Sapphire Point

Mountain Pine Beetle:

There are forests in the West that are experiencing mountain pine beetle epidemics at a historically unprecedented scale. Within the past 10 years the mountain pine beetle has devastated over 1.5 million acres of lodgepole pines in Colorado, 500,000 acres alone in 2007. Although, the pine beetle is a native species and infestations are part of the natural succession of forest, the scale of the area and rate of infestation are unprecedented.

At this stop we will meet Brian Lorch, Director of Summit County Open Space and Trails. Brian will provide you a land manager's perspective of the epidemic, provide an overview of the impacts, and describe some actions that Summit County is taking in response to the infestation.

Global Warming:

Global warming is an issue that many people associate primarily with coastal areas due to its connection with sea-level rise. However, the interior West is also experiencing effects and the concerns over these effects are growing. Recent scientific research indicates that global warming will have profound economic, hydrologic and environmental impacts on the American West. The region will suffer from reduced snowpack, higher temperatures, drought, higher frequency and intensity of wildfires and increased flooding due to rapid snow melt.

At this stop Larry Schweiger, NWF President and CEO, will provide you an overview of global warming, discuss the issues facing the West and update you on NWF's efforts to develop a better energy policy that confronts global warming and protects wildlife.

In Transit to Stop 2: Lunch

Stop 2: Climax Mine and Tailings Pond Overlook

Mining has been a significant force in shaping the landscape of Colorado and the West. Mining shaped the nature of settlement and transportation, creating towns, commerce, roads, and railroads where there were none before. This was facilitated by the 1872 Mining Act that was signed into law by President Grant. This law virtually unchanged since 1872, puts many of America's most treasured western public lands at risk, including important wildlife habitat and hunting areas, valuable fisheries, popular recreation sites, vital drinking water supplies and sensitive roadless areas.

The Climax Mine's reason for being is its huge deposit of molybdenum. The Climax Mine was the largest molybdenum mine in the world, which for many years supplied three-fourths of the world's total supply of the metal. Molybdenum is used as an alloy in producing hard steel. The Climax Molybdenum Company operated the mine nearly continuously in 1900's. The mine has been closed since 1995 awaiting higher molybdenum prices. The mine is anticipated to reopen in 2010 by the current owner Phelps Dodge.

At this stop we will discuss NWF's efforts to reform the 1872 Mining Act through our campaign – Sportsmen United for Sensible Mining. NWF's work on this campaign is in partnership with Trout Unlimited and Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership. An update on reform legislation will also be provided.

Additionally, we will talk about the history of the Climax Mine and some of the ongoing resource issues relating to the clean up efforts and the water rights owned by the mining company.

In Transit to Stop 3:

On our way to Leadville we will discuss water issues facing the West with a focus on the Arkansas River. The Arkansas is the sixth longest river in the U.S. and flows from Colorado, through Kansas, Oklahoma and Arkansas where it flows into the Mississippi. The Arkansas offers a wide variety of recreation including rafting and fishing.

Stop 3: Leadville:

Leadville is the highest incorporated city in the U.S. and is surrounded by the highest mountains in Colorado. The area is rich in history, including old mining ghost towns and boom towns. Leadville itself was the heart of a large silver boom, and historic characters such as Horace and Baby Doe Tabor, Doc Holliday and others once called it home. The town still has much of the original Victorian buildings from that era, and the surrounding mountain scenery is extremely picturesque.

At this stop, you will be given an opportunity to walk through the historic downtown of Leadville.

In Transit to Stop 4:

During our drive to Vail Pass we will discuss energy development in the West. Colorado is one of the states experiencing record leasing, permitting and drilling for oil and gas.

Stop 4: Vail Pass

Vail Pass, with an elevation of 10,666 feet, is a high mountain pass in the Rocky Mountains of central Colorado. Vail Pass sits along the boundary between Eagle and Summit counties, between Vail on the west and Dillon on the east. It provides the route of Interstate 70 (and earlier U.S. Highway 6) between the upper

basins of the Eagle River and the Blue River, both tributaries of the Colorado River.

Members of Colorado's Congressional delegation are seeking federal funding to build a vegetated wildlife overpass on I-70 west of Vail Pass. The bridge, complete with vegetation and fencing, would improve traveler safety by helping to ensure safe passage for wildlife across I-70 and would be the first of its kind in Colorado. If the request is successful, the funds will be allocated to the Colorado Department of Transportation to construct the overpass.

At this stop our guides will provide an overview of wildlife issues in the West and insight into local wildlife that occurs along the route. We will also discuss energy development impacts on wildlife, habitat fragmentation, the importance of maintaining critical habitat and wildlife corridors.

Stop 5: Dillon Dam Road

Completed in September 1963, Dillon Reservoir is the largest water storage facility in the Denver Water system. Building the dam required relocating the entire town of Dillon, Colorado, and a hydroelectric plant. The project diverts water from the Blue River Basin through the Harold D. Roberts Tunnel under the Continental Divide into the South Platte River Basin. Dillon Dam is an earth-fill dam, 5,888 feet long by 231 feet above the Blue River stream bed. Dillon Reservoir's surface area of 3,233 acres and 26.8 miles of shoreline support many recreational activities.

The Dillon Dam provides a terrific backdrop for discussion of water issues in the West. Water is the one of the most precious resources in the West and we are facing a serious crisis. In the long run, we will not have enough water to meet the fast-growing needs of city residents, farmers, ranchers, Native Americans, and wildlife. The demand is increasing; the supply is not.