

PWV training weekend - May 18-20, 2018

Bill attended the PWV training weekend at the Cub Scout Ranch near Red Feather Lakes, north of Ft. Collins

Report on VWR training weekend of Poudre Wilderness Volunteers (PWV)
Bill Betz

I attended the weekend as an observer – Friday PM, Saturday all day and evening, and Sunday AM. The main event was the 6-7 hour hike on Saturday for trainees, during which time they encountered different ‘stations’ with actors illustrating different trail and campsite situations (e.g., dog off leash, bike in Wilderness, illegal camp). At each station trainees practiced the ‘Authority of the Resource’ technique – i.e., they discussed the encountered problem not in terms of the law but in terms of how the Wilderness is helped by avoiding the activity.

The scope of this annual event is enormous – about 150 people attended, including 14 observers like me, plus group leaders, ‘recerts,’ and of course recruits. On the Saturday training hike, I was assigned to one of 8 groups, each with 10-12 people. The groups hiked in a carefully choreographed sequence so that each group encountered all of the ~15 different stations. At each station, 2 recruits in the group were assigned to address the actors of the faux situation. Thus, the actors put on their shows 8 times – once for each group that circulated through the stations.

The logistics were nearly mind-boggling. I estimate that about 75 people were directly involved in planning and staging the weekend. Remarkably, they fed us all with meals cooked on site (no caterer) – 2 breakfasts and 2 dinners – and the food was very good. Lots of donated beer, too. Altogether it was an astonishingly successful enterprise by the all-volunteer PWV. And the people were, without exception, friendly, energetic, helpful.

It is important to understand the roots of how they do it, remembering that PWV was founded the same year as FENW. They have 300 members, and that’s Member spelled with a capital M, because each one has gone through this training. That is, a person who sends in money is not automatically counted as a member. Moreover, members once trained are not left to do patrols only, but in addition are actively recruited to other jobs. These recruitments can be targeted to individuals because a lot of information – skills, interests, background - is requested on the application form. Thus, these Members are the people who staff their 30+ committees. For example, the cooks, dish washers, cleaners, and event managers for the weekend were drawn from this group. There may be a lesson here for FENW: in the past, we have not made particularly strong attempts to recruit our VWRs to become more involved (nor have we sought much information about them on the VWR application).

~45 images

1. The drive north of Ft. Collins was lovely- the cottonwoods in the creek bottom were just leafing out



2.



3. This is the main hall (unheated) where all indoor activities took place



4. Margaret Shaklee, as Immediate Past President of PWV, was in charge of the entire show, all weekend



5. Friday dinner - 3 kinds of chili, corn bread, salads, dessert. Note the kitchen staff uniforms - all PWV volunteers.



6.



7. There were a few displays at the end of the room.

National Wilderness

Stewardship Alliance

2017 Webinars

Feb. 7: Randy Welsh
"The National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act of 2016"

November: Jack Morgan (PWV member), Dana Blumenthal, Linda Joyce

"Climate Change/Invasive Plants"

NWSA Mission:

The National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance is building a nationwide network of volunteer organizations that provide stewardship for America's enduring resource of wilderness. Our vision is to see each wilderness area within the National Wilderness Preservation System adopted by a wilderness stewardship organization dedicated to protecting, restoring and nurturing the area's wilderness.

Through partnerships between community-based, non-profit groups and each government agency charged with the management of our national wilderness areas, we can ensure a healthy, resilient and lasting wilderness resource for today and for future generations.

NWSA Programs Committee:

In cooperation with other committees, the Programs Committee will design, conduct, and evaluate the programs and services through which the National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance fulfills its mission: to develop a growing network of volunteer-based organizations to provide stewardship for America's enduring resource of wilderness.

National Wilderness Workshop Gunnison, Colorado October 10-13, 2018

NWSA Programs Committee Chairman/Board Member:
Dave Cantrell

Other PWV members involved with NWSA:

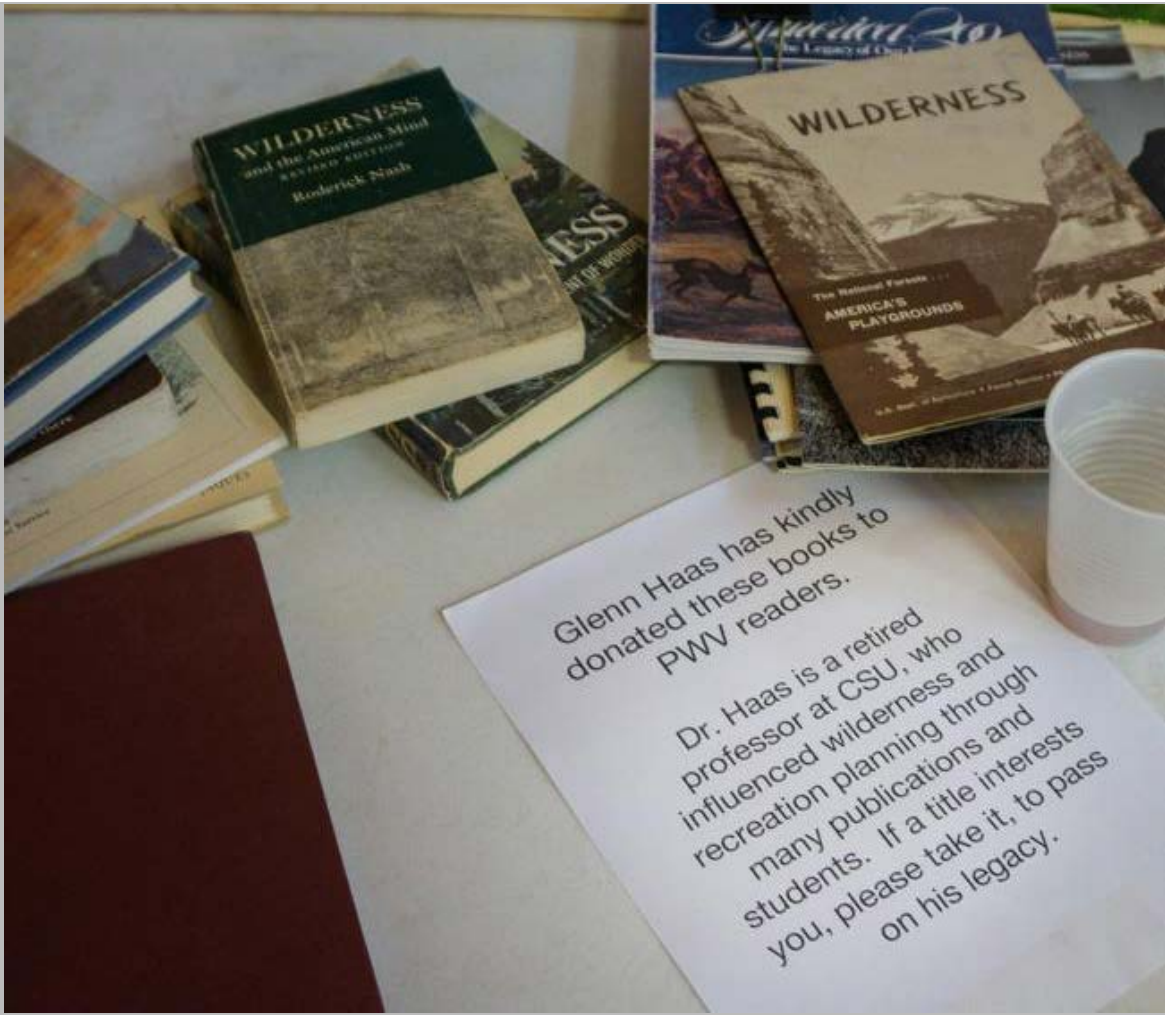
Chuck Bell: Helping start a new Regional Stewardship group in Arkansas, Indiana & Missouri

All Boris: Helping create a national list and map of stewardship groups

Janet Caille: Helping start a stewardship group for the Bridger Wilderness in Pinedale, Wyoming

NWSA Programs Committee is looking for additional volunteers. Please sign on clipboard provided if you'd like to be involved with this "Boots on the Ground" national effort!





10.



11. Note the blue neckerchief - identifies Mark as an observer



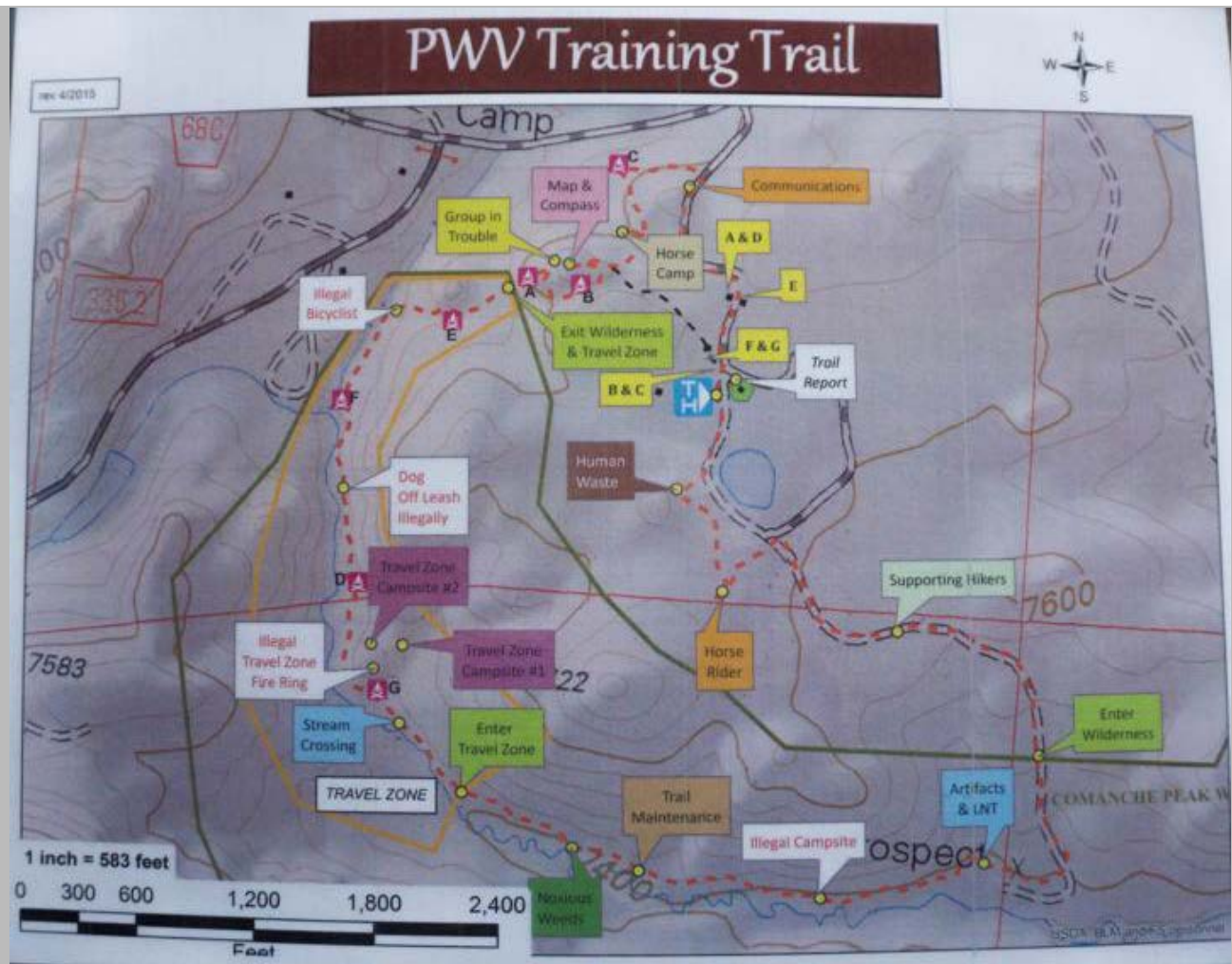
12. The 14 observers met outside with our leader, Dave Cantrell (blue bandana on hat)



13. Observers came from all over Colorado, and even from New Mexico and Montana



14. Saturday map: Intersecting loops of trails for 8 hiking groups



15. They ran a tight ship. Leaders carried alarmed cell phones to stay on schedule

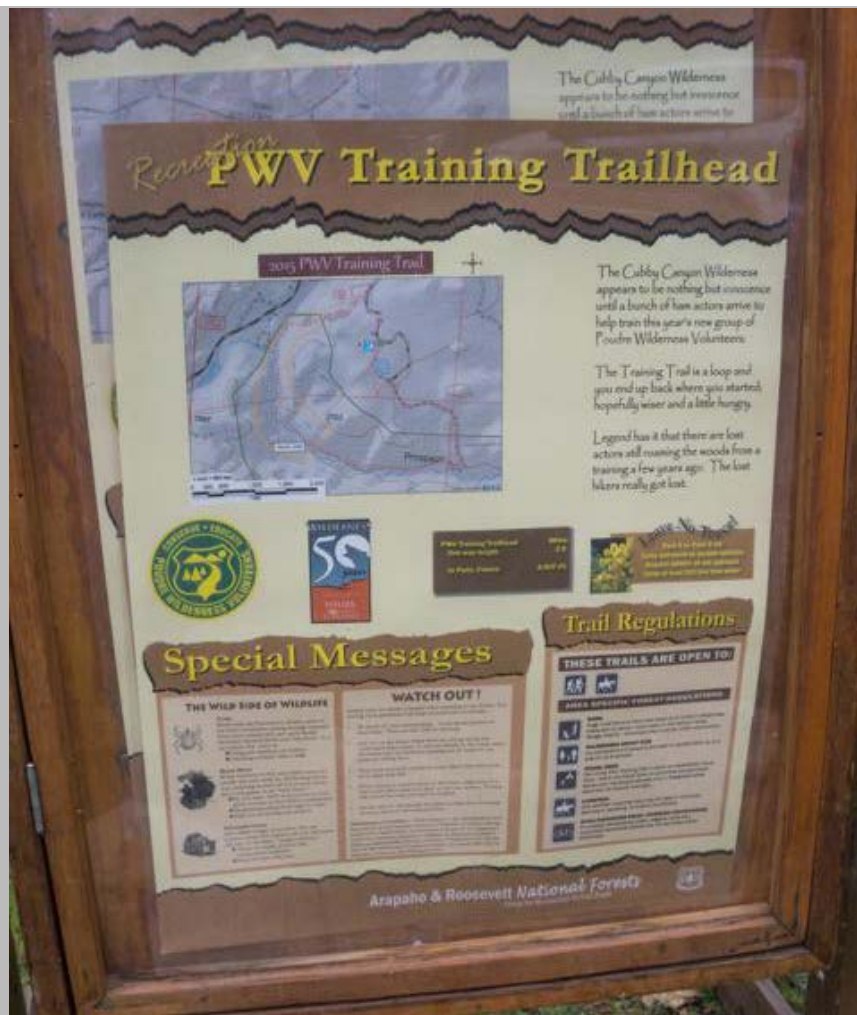
2016 PWV Training Trail Schedule

Badger	Coyote	Deer
Trailhead & Kiosk 8:00 AM 8:10 AM 10	Trailhead & Kiosk 8:00 AM 8:10 AM 10	Trailhead 8:20 AM 1
Horse Rider 8:16 AM 8:20 AM 4	Artifacts & LNT 8:20 AM 8:25 AM 5	Map and 8:38 AM 1
Supporting Hikers 8:25 AM 8:35 AM 5	Illegal Campsite 8:30 AM 8:45 AM 15	Horse 8:58 AM 1
Enter Wilderness 8:40 AM 8:45 AM 5	Trail Maintenance 8:50 AM 9:00 AM 10	Communi 9:22 AM
Artifacts & LNT 8:50 AM 8:55 AM 10	Noxious Weeds 9:05 AM 9:15 AM 10	Huma 9:45 AM
Illegal Campsite 9:00 AM 9:15 AM 15	Enter Travel Zone 9:17 AM 9:22 AM 5	Hors 10:00 AM
Trail Maintenance	Stream Crossing 9:25 AM 9:33 AM	Suppor 10:09 AM

16. At the trailhead Saturday morning



17.



18. First station: illegal camp near water



19. Second station: trail work (PWV combines trail work training with patrolling)



21. Tools (left) were demoed



22. Noxious plant demo (musk thistle)



23. Group co-leader Janet (PWV Secretary) discusses Travel Zones - places in Wilderness with designated campsites (but not permits or registration). Travel zones don't exist in FENW's Wilderness areas. (The signs were for training purposes - today's training was not in a designated Wilderness Area.)



24. Illegal campfire ring near Elkhorn Creek



25. Celia (co-leader) and sign that needs reporting to FS



26. Ferocious dog off leash



27. Practicing Authority of the Resource to convince owner to put dog on leash



28.



29. Uh-oh... bike in Wilderness. At the end of each "encounter" the actors and group leaders would critique the performance of the trainees.



30. VWR's worst nightmare: Campsite - booze, altitude sickness, handgun firing, missing child



31.



32. After the show



34. Next station: map & compass



35. Horse camp



36. Treesaver plus horse on highline - all good



37. I asked and was surprised to learn that these riders seldom see llamas in their areas.



38. Onward! getting a bit tired, but at least it's not windy and not too cold



39. Leave No Trace demos



40. Finally - good hikers (left), doing stuff right, just a bit lost



41. My team - Antelope - 2 leaders, 3 observers, 7 recruits



42. Dinner was followed by graduation for recruits





44. Bill and Margaret Shaklee



45. Bill and Dave Cantrell, PWV member for 21 years, on the board of NWSA



47. Youngest attendee, Finn, with parents



48. Saturday dinner



49. After dinner speaker: Dr. George N. Wallace, longtime PWV member, Emeritus CSU Prof, local rancher, and the original author of the idea of the Authority of the Resource Technique (ART)

His topic was ART in an age of political discord. He urged rangers to try especially hard to find topics of accord with hikers they meet, and focus on those subjects. He listed a bunch - recreation, economics, and so forth.



On Sunday morning were several short courses - some required: weather safety, 5 noxious plants, basic first aid, and several optional: LNT, map & compass, trail savvy, wildflowers & birds.
