

# SUMMIT DAILY NEWS

## Thousands of acres of potential wilderness to be discussed Monday

Plan discussed today could add 30,000 acres to land considered 'wilderness'

**BY BOB BERWYN**

**summit daily news**

**Summit County, CO Colorado**

**September 23, 2007**

SUMMIT COUNTY - Conservation advocates will discuss adding up to 30,000 acres of wilderness lands in Summit County at a meeting of the Blue River Sierra Club group Monday.

Lisa Smith, representing the White River Wilderness Coalition, will present the so-called, "Hidden Gems Wilderness Campaign," which could add big new chunks of land in the Tenmile Range, near Hoosier Ridge and other parts of the county.

Wilderness advocates say the additional land will add mid-elevation terrain to mix, helping to provide more protected habitat for wildlife. Much of the existing wilderness is in the high-elevation rock and ice zone.

The idea at this point is to get input from as many stakeholders as possible to craft a proposal that has buy-in from a wide range of supporters, explained Clare Bastable of the Colorado Mountain Club.

The plan to add new wilderness by congressional action is still in a fact-finding stage, according to Smith and Wilderness Workshop director Sloan Shoemaker.

Some local mountain bikers have expressed concern that some of the proposed wilderness additions could significantly affect recreational opportunities in Summit County. Wilderness advocates and the Boulder-based International Mountain Bicycling Association have held some talks about the plan. Both sides said they are hopeful they can reach a compromise that would allow the mountain bike community to endorse the wilderness plan.

Shoemaker said the wilderness proposal requires a detailed trail-by-trail look to resolve any possible conflicts. Some questions have also come up regarding the mountain pine beetle infestation and how that might relate to wilderness additions.

A previous report on this proposal elicited a web comment from a reader, who remarked that the plan was

---

A storm rolls in over the Gore Range, visible behind grassy Eliot Ridge, an area that could be added to the Eagles Nest Wilderness under a draft plan to be presented today at the Sierra Club meeting (6:30 p. m.) at the Frisco Rec Center.

Summit Daily/Bob Berwyn

---



[Click to Enlarge](#)

[Browse and Buy Summit Daily Photos](#)

cooked up by national environmental groups in Washington, D.C.

Shoemaker said that charge is far from the truth.

"This is as homegrown as it gets," Shoemaker said. "This comes from people who have lived, worked and played in the White River National Forest for 30 years."

The Blue River Group, Sierra Club will host Lisa Smith, with the Hidden Gems Wilderness Campaign today at the Frisco Rec Center near the corner of Third Avenue and Main Street beginning at 6:30 pm.

The presentation is free and open to anyone interested in the Wilderness Proposal. For more information, contact Karn at (970) 468-9013 or [bluerivergroup@comcast.net](mailto:bluerivergroup@comcast.net).

*Bob Berwyn can be reached at (970) 331-5996, or at [bberwyn@summitdaily.com](mailto:bberwyn@summitdaily.com).*

---

[BACK](#) 