

An incentive for capturing Hidden Gems

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PITKIN COUNTY — With the high country now at its most photogenic, the Hidden Gems Wilderness Campaign is offering an extra incentive to get out into it with a camera.

The campaign has announced a three-season photo contest, with submissions invited from amateurs and professionals alike. Entries will be judged by a panel including renowned landscape photographers John Fielder and David Hiser.

The photo contest will run in three seasonal cycles — summer, fall and winter — with separate deadlines and judgments. The deadline for the first, summer cycle, is Sept. 18.

“This is another great reason to join us on one of our Hidden Gems hikes, or get out there on your own to explore these beautiful places,” said Lisa Moreno, the campaign's Pitkin County coordinator. “The weather's been great, and wildflower season is just hitting its climax.”

Submitted images must be of, or taken in, one of the 40-odd areas around the White River and Gunnison National Forests that the Hidden Gems campaign is proposing for wilderness designation.

General landscapes, macro/closeups and wildlife shots are all acceptable, with special consideration going to photos that capture the “essential hidden gemness” of the area.

Winners in the amateur division will get to participate in a one-day photo workshop next summer with one of the contest judges, and their images will be featured in Hidden Gems gift cards and in a future exhibit. The winning professional images will be presented as large-format prints to members of the Colorado Congressional delegation and used in official Hidden Gems Campaign posters.

Additionally, there will be a “People's Choice” prize of a \$250 gift certificate to a local retailer.

For full contest guidelines, as well as a hike schedule and detailed information about the wilderness proposal areas, see the Hidden Gems campaign website, www.whiteriverwild.org.