Winter Wildlands Alliance hosts Grassroots Advocacy Skills Conference in Colorado, Oct. 24-25

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Advocates for backcountry skiing, showshoeing and other quiet human-powered snowsports will meet with public lands managers, media experts and other groups to protect winter ecosystems and recreational opportunites.
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GOLDEN, CO – Winter Wildlands Alliance, a Boise-based national nonprofit organization preserving winter wildlands and promoting a quality human-powered snowsports experience on public lands, will host a Grassroots Advocacy Skills Conference in Golden, CO, Oct. 24-25.

Every two years, WWA gathers grassroots activists and public lands managers from across the western Snowbelt states to discuss, debate and learn about the challenges facing land managers, human-powered snowsports enthusiasts, and the environment.

The 2008 conference is being held at the American Mountaineering Center, 710 Tenth St., Golden, CO. Activists from WWA's 28 grassroots groups will attend, and people from other non-profit conservation organizations and interests are welcome.

WHY THIS CONFERENCE?

"We organize this event because knowledge is key to effective grassroots participation," says WWA Grassroots Program Director Steve Ryder. "Winter Wildlands' mission is to protect the quiet and quality of quiet winter recreationists' experiences in winter on public lands.Theattention of Forest Service recreation planning has been devoted to summer ATVs, which also has boomed in recent years. Most forests are not currently including winter in their plans. We want to work, along with 28 member grassroots groups to ensure fair access to high-quality winter recreation experiences for quiet users as well as the snowmobile groups, making sure that those who treasure the quiet of winter outdoors can continue enjoying this valuable experience."

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Friday, Oct. 24

Noon - Registration

1-3 pm - Small Organization Survival Skills Workshop

3:30 -5:30 pm - Communications Workshop & WWA Communications Toolkit

5:30-6:30 pm - Opening Reception & Tours of the American Mountaineering Museum (courtesy of the Colorado Mountain Club)

6:30-8:30 pm - Opening Dinner with Keynote Speaker Stephen Saunders, President, Rocky Mountain Climate Organization

Saturday, Oct. 25

8 am - Continental Breakfast

8:30 am - Plenary Session, “The Federal Agencies and NEPA” & Michael Harris, Director, Environmental Law Clinic, Sturm College of Law, University of Denver

9 am - The Travel Management Rule: Where Did It Come From? Where Is It Going?

10 am - Break

10:15 am - Agency Perspectives on NEPA, NFMA and the TM Rule & Representatives from USFS and EPA

11 am - Travel Planning on the Ground (or “Waiting for Winter”) & Representatives from activist groups

Noon - Lunch

12:45 pm - Resource Impacts from Motorized Recreation & Representatives from CNHP and NPS

1:30 pm - Vail Pass Recreation Area: A Model for Resolving User Conflicts? & Representatives from White River National Forest and Vail Pass Task Force

2:45 pm - Recreational Trends: Hybrid Skiing

3:30 pm - Break

3:45 pm. - Roundtable: Winter Recreation on Public Lands

4:30 pm - Reports from grassroots groups on the year’s successes and challenges

5:30 pm - Adjourn

Speakers include:

- Mike Harris, Director of the Environmental Law Clinic at University of Denver
- Tom Tidwell, Regional Forester, Region 1, U.S. Forest Service
- Members of the Vail Pass Task Force
- U.S. Forest recreation staff members from Colorado and Utah
- Representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency, Region 8
- Natural Sounds Program, National Parks Service

HOW TO REGISTER

Anyone interested may register at: winterwildlands.org/grassroots/grconf_register.php or contact Lana Weber at 208/343-1630.

Cost for the conference is $50 for members, $75 for nonmembers, and $35 for students with ID. Registration after Oct. 10 is an additional $25.

All registration includes the Keynote Dinner on Friday and continental breakfast and lunch on Saturday.

~ Winter Wildlands Alliance is a national nonprofit organization promoting and preserving winter wildlands and a quality human-powered snowsports experience on public lands. For more information, or to join, visit WWA at www.winterwildlands.org ~