

## ten days to live

### Where the Wild Things Go

#### Phantom Canyon hosts Wilderness Act celebration

Guess who's turning 40? Do you spot the bashful red cheeks in the corner of the room? Yup, it's old Title 16, Chapter 23, Sec. 1132 -- the Wilderness Act. Sly dog.

If you're up for the party, The Central Colorado Wilderness Coalition will be celebrating the big 4-0 next Wednesday at Phantom Canyon. Happy hour will usher in friends of nature, and they'd like you to join them and swap stories of your own love of the wild over some beer (under 21 welcome as well, but it's root beer for you). Generous donations by local businesses will stock the honey pot providing door prizes for showing up.

Need to get informed before heading out? Go online at [www.cccwilderness.org](http://www.cccwilderness.org) and check out what some local activists have put together to help save our Mother Earth. Their straightforward mission statement: "Create more wilderness in Colorado."

Wilderness is sacred to many people, regardless of political affiliation, socioeconomic status and other dividing lines. Many would argue that now, more than ever before, our wild places are in great danger. The Bush administration isn't exactly on good terms with Smokey Bear when it comes to respect for the environment. The Central Colorado Wilderness Coalition is one grass-roots answer to this growing concern.

"What we've found is that local citizen action is the best way to support federal change," said Michael Rogers, organizer of the 40th anniversary celebration.

The CCWC works to inventory lands and organize proposals for our congressional representatives. By creating new wilderness areas, CCWC intends to safeguard the ecological contributions of wild areas, such as watershed protection, wildlife habitat and biological diversity.

The CCWC launched their campaign roughly two and a half years ago, working in conjunction with the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. They've recently outlined a list of the top 10 areas within the Pike and San Isabel national forests that they hope can earn wilderness designation.

To qualify as a wilderness, a space must fulfill some basic requirements: occupy 5,000 acres or more (to support viable habitat), stay roadless (though it can have old structures of historical or archaeological interest, such as an old railroad line), and offer an opportunity for solitude in a place predominately untouched by man.



John Stansfield, coordinator of the Central Colorado Wilderness Coalition, stands in the Beaver Creek Proposed Wilderness on the south slope of Pikes Peak, looking toward the already-designated Sangre de Cristo Wilderness on the horizon.

Nature writer Rick Bass sums it up best with a plea in his novel, *The Book of Yaak*, a personal homage to the Yaak Valley of Montana:

"It [the Yaak Valley] is not a place to come to.

"It is a place to save -- a place to exercise our strength and compassion -- that last little bit that the advertisers have not yet been able to breed, or condition, out of us.

"This valley still exists in the Lower Forty-eight as a chance to explain to corporate America -- Big Timber, mostly -- that as human beings we still have at our core an essence, a yearning for and affiliation with wilderness, and that we can only be pushed and herded so far.

"What do I want?

"I want the last few roadless areas in this still-wild valley to remain that way."

Stand up, speak out and vote for the cause of wilderness, but first come share a few drinks with likeminded friends at Phantom Canyon. Go wild.

-- **Matthew Schniper**

*(capsule)*

Central Colorado Wilderness Coalition celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the passage of the Wilderness Act

Phantom Canyon Brewing Co., 2 E. Pikes Peak Ave.

Wednesday, Sept. 1, 5- 8 p.m., under 21 welcome.

For more information, call Michael Rogers at 719-328-9234 or go online at [www.cccwilderness.org](http://www.cccwilderness.org)