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Estes Park

Trail Gazette

Special!
Valentine's Day contest
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Wednesday edition

February 7, 2001

Estes Park, Colorado

www.eprail.com

Volume 31, Number 60

50¢

Comment period on snowmobiling extended

By JAY GENTILE

A typical environmental assessment (EA) released by Rocky Mountain National Park for public input receives about 200 comments.

The recent EA released by the Park that proposes closing one of the Park's two snowmobiling trails has so far received over 2,500 comments.

"This is the largest response that this Park

has ever received from the American public on a single issue," said RMNP Randy Jones.

The EA was released Dec. 15, 2000. Then the Jan. 13 deadline for public comment was extended to Feb. 27 to ensure more public comment. Now it is being extended to March 6.

The one week time extension is being implemented to coordinate with a deadline for public comment on proposed snowmobile regulations that were amended by the Washington, D.C.,

office of the National Park Service.

The proposed regulations on snowmobile use were published in the Federal Register on Jan. 5. If adopted, the proposed regulations would retain only one access route currently used by snowmobiles in the Park, which is consistent with the Park's preferred alternative in the EA.

To avoid confusion, public comments on the EA and the rule change will both be accepted through the same date, March 6.

The Washington D.C. office has produced a draft of "the rule that would occur if we adopted the preferred alternative," said RMNP spokesman Peter Allen. "There's nothing final in that, just as there's nothing final in what's being proposed by the Park."

The regulations would not take effect if the
See Snowmobiles: Page 2

Science to go



Photo by Walt Hester

Colorado State University professor Terrence O'Donnell, left, shows Estes Park High School students Alex Burke and Jeff Van Reese human and animal hearts on Friday, as a part of the CSU mobile biology lab. The lab is designed to show high school students interesting examples of biology learning.

Prepared for predators

Mountain lions, coyotes in town nothing unusual, but residents should still be wary and take precautions

By JAY GENTILE

About two weeks ago, a mature female mountain lion along with her three kittens attacked and killed an elk.

It happened just under the kitchen window in the backyard of a home near Big Horn Drive.

Near the end of last year, a deer was killed by a lion in the backyard of a Carriage Hills home.

Also around that time, two mountain lions killed three llamas near Pinewood Springs and a horse was attacked by a lion on Fish Creek Road a few weeks ago.

Yet Rick Spowart of the Colorado Division of Wildlife said it's nothing out of the ordinary. He said most lion and coyote attacks occur during winter.

"To me, it's all part of living in Estes," he said. "We have a very healthy lion population."

He said there are currently about 12 to 15 mountain lions roaming the Estes Valley, with several more in the Big Thompson Canyon area.

He said more lions flock to Estes Park in winter, following their deer and elk prey who do the same. He said coyotes, whose numbers in the Estes Valley are at least 100, get desperate in winter as populations of prey like squirrels decrease.

He said two summers ago, a boy, age 10 or 11, was attacked by a female mountain lion on the west side of Rocky Mountain National Park. "Kids can attract predators because of high pitched yells and running around," Spowart said.

While he said "your chances of getting attacked by a lion is much less than being struck by lightning," it does make sense to take a few simple precau-

What to do

If You Meet a Mountain Lion:

Stay calm. Talk calmly yet firmly to it. Move slowly. Stop or back away slowly. Do not run. Raise your arms to appear larger. If the lion becomes aggressive, throw stones, branches or whatever you can get your hands on. Do not crouch down or turn your back. Fight back if a lion attacks you. Lions have been driven away by prey that fights back.

Source: www.dnr.state.co.us/wildlife/

tions.

He said not to leave small children or pets outside unattended. "Fences do help," said Dr. Marie Richardson, owner of Animal Hospital of the Rockies.

Richardson said she has seen around 10 cases of attacks on pets this year, which is less than the average of 15 to 20 per winter. She said dogs who are attacked have a better chance of survival than cats, but most animals that are brought to the vet do survive.

Jean Koebler of Animal Medical Center of Estes Park said she's seen less than 10 cats and dogs brought in this year, but said she'd heard of several other cases of animals that die immediately from attacks or simply disappear. She has seen it happen more often to cats than dogs.

She added that two horses

have been attacked this year. In addition to the one on Fish Creek Road, she also said this summer a horse was attacked by a lion near Wind River Lodge.

Spowart said this winter he hasn't seen as many instances of coyote attacks on pets as usual, and hopes this is due to residents taking proper precautions.

He urges people walking their pets to carry pepper spray or pepper mace. "For people walking small dogs, coyotes will chase the dogs right in front of the owner," he said.

Mountain lions are typically more stealth operators in the night.

At the Estes Park Police Department, Animal Control Officer Mary Thacker said that lion attacks on animals probably happen more than we know about. "We just don't see them because they're active at night," she said.

Yet the family near Big Horn Drive was able to watch the lion and her kittens visit their backyard every night for a week to feed on the elk they had killed.

"They were thrilled to death to see the lion," Spowart said. "It's like 'Wild Kingdom' in your backyard."

He added that lions are game animals that may be hunted from mid-November to late March. Yet kittens and females with kittens are off limits. The family near Big Horn Drive did not want their exact location disclosed out of fear that hunters would seek out the lion.

Adult mountain lions, Colorado's largest cats, are more than six feet long and weight

See Predators: Page 2

First of a two-part series

Bud Hampton — a true explorer

By JAY GENTILE

It's kind of daunting trying to describe Bud Hampton — is he a scientist, a business executive, an author, a photographer, a world traveler, a family man, a mountain climber, a military man, a naturalist or a philosopher?

Hampton, who quietly calls himself "multifaceted," is all of these and more. But the essence of this Estes Park legend can be summed up best in just one word.

Bud Hampton is an explorer.

What makes him an explorer is not the fact that he spent years living with members of the Stone Age in Indonesia, dodged bullets while living in Angola, lived with Orthodox monks in Russia or scaled some of the world's most arduous peaks.

What makes him an explorer is simply the way his brain works.

"I feel exploration is a mental state," Hampton said, easing into the sixth hour of a recent interview with the *Trail-Gazette*. "Exploration is something I have just instinctually done my whole life. The moment of discovery is wonderful."

Bud the younger

It all started for 72-year-old O.W. "Bud" Hampton as a boy in Denver. Raised not far from the Denver Museum of Natural History, he spent his days studying rocks and minerals while watching artists craft pottery.

After graduating from the University of Colorado in 1950 with a degree in naval science and geology, he and his new bride Fleur were shipped to a U.S. Marine camp in North Carolina, where Hampton's views as a training officer on people and race first made their way into the spotlight.

"I was training blacks and whites in the same way for combat," Hampton recalls of the days half-a-century ago. His superior told him that "I didn't understand color" and as a result would never be sent to fight in Korea — which was necessary for a serious career in the military.

But it was just Bud being Bud.

"I'm always excited about differences between people," he said. "It's sad that the majorities are afraid of the differences. I get positively excited about learning from people I'm with. It has nothing to do with a person's

color or ethnic group. I miss those of color when I am not around them."

While staying on as a military reservist after being promoted to lieutenant colonel, Hampton moved into the private sector where he enjoyed a successful career with Amoco.

In addition to figuring out the best places for new oil exploration, Hampton's job "was to be in different countries."

African safari

"I loved Angola, Africa" Hampton said of his first experience living abroad. "I fit in well. I felt inclined to stay, even when Amoco and other expatriate companies were ready to pull out. The political problems weren't a big problem for me."

The "political problems" soon became a full-scale civil war involving three rival political factions, one backed with Communist Russian and Cuban support.

Hampton called it "interesting" to live in a place where "it was normal for people to work in the daytime and fight and kill at night. As is often the case, it was the innocent who were

See Hampton: Page 2



Photo by Jay Gentile

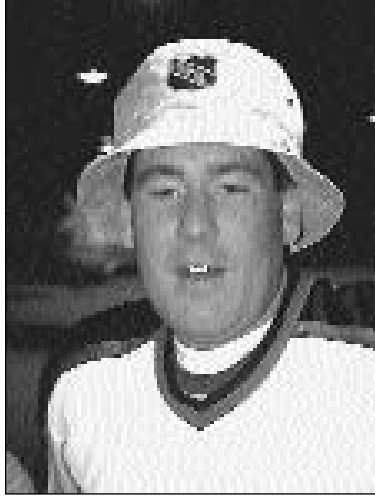
Bud Hampton sits in his kitchen where the walls are adorned with trappings of his travels.

Speaking out

Trail-Gazette photographer Walt Hester asked people "What do you think about the Estes Valley Recreation and Park District's plan to build an ice rink?"



Joel York, Estes Park
It's a great idea. It would bring more sports to the high school. I think it would help if the rink was multi-surfaced (for both ice skating and in-line).



James Putman, Estes Park
It has to be a roller rink for the summer.



Matt Heiser, Estes Park
I think it is overdue. It would be a great attraction for the town in winter.



Tom Jaster, Estes Park
It would be great to have an ice rink in winter and a roller rink in summer.



Andy York, Estes Park
Whoever thought of it is a genius.

EVIA meeting to feature Riverwalk discussion

At the next EVIA meeting at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 8, EPURA will present some of its plans for the proposed Riverfront Walkway project.

However, it should be noted that the meeting will be held in the Municipal Building, rather than at its regularly scheduled meeting place of the Hondius Room in the Estes Park Public Library for this one meeting.

Please enter by the police station door and go upstairs to Room 203.

The Riverfront project is a development of concept plans for its extension westward. Everyone interested is invited to attend and contribute additional suggestions.

For more information, call EVIA President Alice Gray at (970) 586-1060.

Snowmobiles: 95 percent of comments e-mailed

Continued from page 1

Park's preferred alternative is not adopted.

The flood of comments received thus far on the EA has taken Rocky Mountain National Park by surprise.

"More than 95 percent of the comments have been received by e-mail," noted Allen. "The ease of sending information by e-mail has dramatically increased public participation."

He said it is not necessarily the number of comments that is important for Park decision makers, it is consensus among the comments that is key.

"I think this reflects a change of communication in our society," Allen said. "Our snowmobiling (EA) is a good indication of what we should expect in the future for controversial topics."

Despite the controversy over the proposed closure of Trail Ridge Road to snowmobiles, Allen said most of the comments have supported the Park's preferred alternative.

This alternative would close the 16-mile stretch of Trail Ridge Road from the Kawuneeche Visitor Center to Milner Pass. It would leave open a two-mile trail that passes through the Park near the

town of Grand Lake.

"The preferred alternative would allow riders to cross a two-mile section of the Park which provides access to more than 100 miles of trails in adjacent (U.S. Forest Service) lands," said Jones. "Last winter, this short access route accounted for 87 percent of the snow machine use in the Park."

Other alternatives laid out in the EA include keeping it the way it is with the two trails open, keeping the two trails open while opening two other trails to snowmobiling, and closing the entire park to snowmobilers.

During the winter of 1999/2000, a total of 28,417 snowmobiles entered the Park — among the highest in the National Park Service but not as high as the 31,582 snowmobiles seen in the winter of 1997/1998.

Copies of the EA are available upon request. The EA is also available on the Internet at www.nps.gov/romo, in the news and events section, or at the Estes Park Public Library.

Comments must be received in writing by March 6 and must include name and mailing

address. Comments on the EA may be sent in several ways:

- By mail: Superintendent, Rocky Mountain National Park, Estes Park, CO 80517.

- By e-mail: romo_superintendent@nps.gov.

- By Fed EX: Superintendent, Rocky Mountain National Park, 1000 U.S. Highway 36, Estes Park, CO 80517.

- Hand deliver: Rocky Mountain National Park Headquarters, 1000 Highway 36, Estes Park, CO or to the Kawuneeche Visitor Center, Rocky Mountain National Park, P.O. Box 100, Grand Lake, CO 80447.

The EA and the proposed regulations are two separate items that are being managed by different National Park Service offices.

Comments on the proposed regulations should be sent to Kym Hall, Regulations Program Manager, National Park Service 1849 C Street N.W., Room 7413, Washington, DC 20240.

Comments may also be faxed to (202) 208-4206 or sent via e-mail to kym_hall@nps.gov.

Town building permits down slightly in January

Building permits issued by the Town of Estes Park reached a valuation of \$1,119,398 in January 2001, versus \$1,120,499 in January 2000.

Permits for new construction include those issued for Brian Murphy, 253 Steamer Court, new single-family, detached condominium, \$120,864; Brian Murphy, 257 Steamer Court, single-family, detached condominium, \$116,337; Greg & Sandra Rounds, 1805 Cherokee Drive, single-family, detached dwelling, \$114,974; Ray & Sandy Kieft, 660 Findley Court, single-family, detached dwelling, \$212,056; Bill Fairbanks, 1029 Tranquil Lane, private garage, \$16,183; Dan & Carolyn Mangler, 1825 Cherokee Drive, single-family, detached dwelling, \$114,330; and Elk Ridge Builders, 279 Solomon Drive, single-family, detached dwelling, \$114,941.

Permits for additions and alterations include those issued for Vern & Cathie Hilyard, 159 Stanley Circle Drive, covert garage into bedroom and bath, \$25,000; Wes Swanson, 1655 Prospect Estates Drive, bedroom and garage/shop addition, \$37,766; Sandra Cole, 241 Old Man Mountain Lane, family room and deck addition, \$39,385; William Pinkham, 760 Mead-

ow Circle, kitchen, home office and bath remodel, \$50,000; and Durango Kellie Steele, 540 Chapin Lane, loft, entry and remodel, \$40,000.

Permits for miscellaneous work include those issued for Maureen Powell, 269 Solomon Drive, deck addition, \$184; Richard Norris, 1141 Fairway Club Circle, C-1, sewer line back-up restoration, \$20,000; Richard Norris, 1141 Fairway Club Circle, C-3, sewer line back-up restoration, \$20,000; Misty Mountain Lodge, 232 E. Riverside Drive, re-roof, \$3,635; Pine Meadows, 508 Grand Estates Drive, re-roof, \$8,630; Dennis Brown, 220 Virginia Drive, #6, new deck, \$1,600; George & Helen Platt, 201 Fall River Lane, re-roof, \$4,400; Cecilia Mularz, 1078 Pine Knoll Drive, gas line and gas logs installation, \$57; John Henry, 437 S. St. Vrain Ave., replace rooftop heating unit, \$1,200; Dennis Browd/Menard, 220 Virginia Drive, #1, replacement of door, windows, electrical, plumbing, insulation, deck, \$21,781; Gene Moore, 1130 Fairway Club Circle, #1, furnace and water heater installation, \$4,575, and George Mejica, 140 Wonderview Ave., furnace installation, \$1,500.

Predators: Small animals, children should be watched

Continued from page 1

130 pounds or more, according to the Division of Wildlife's Web site. They have the largest geographic range of any native American mammal other than humans.

In Colorado, they are most

abundant in foothills, canyons or mesa country — more at home in bushy areas and woodlands than in forests or open prairies, the Web site says. Adults maintain their condition by eating a deer a week.

Coyotes are about four feet long and 30 to 40 pounds in weight. They are most active at dawn and dusk, feeding on just about anything organic, the Web site stated.

Hampton: From Africa to the Orient

Continued from page 1

getting killed."

Still, Bud and Fleur befriended a 17-year old boy from Luanda, Angola's capital. Bud found a dentist who turned the boy's black teeth to white and helped him learn English.

After a meeting with the Communist faction, the boy told Bud "they told me if I kill you I could have the house."

Then one night, Bud defended his house against attackers who were shooting from the street in front of the house. Both Hampton and Amoco knew it was time to leave.

Off to the Orient

A quick transfer landed Hampton in Tokyo, where he found himself in the midst of high-level

business negotiations with the Japanese.

For this, he studied up on Japanese culture and learned that in negotiation, they were well prepared for expected business maneuvers.

So, using "The MacArthur Approach" from World War II, Bud showed up one day at the board room with a backpack, water and food, telling the Japanese that he would sleep on the table until a deal was made.

Not only did he make the deal using the unconventional technique, he made lifelong friends — a phenomenon Hampton says "happens almost everywhere I go."

But how does he so easily befriend non-English speaking foreigners?

The Elk Fest Committee is looking for new volunteer members to develop and expand Elk Fest 2001.

An informational meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 12, in the Trustee Board Room at the Municipal Building.

The Town Special Events Department and the Elk Fest Committee will be on hand to explain the event and their needs.

Anyone interested is invited to attend.

For more information, call (970) 586-6104.

Elk Fest Committee looking for volunteers

Drivers License Office hours set for February

During the month of February, the Estes Park Drivers License Office will be open Feb. 7, 8, 14, 21, 22 and 28.

Driving tests will be given on Wednesday only by appointment.

The officer hours are from 8:30 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m.

Longs Peak smacks us in the face while squirrels and birds race around his rectangular wooden deck.

His semicircular glasses, attached to a dark blue string around his neck, sit perched above the nostrils of his large, reddish nose. He gently scratches his scruffy white beard, pats down his wild light brown streaks of hair and delves into the topic of Indonesia — a chapter of his life that he is perhaps best known for.

Editor's note: Part two of this series will discuss Hampton's life in Indonesia, his adventures in Estes Park and his life philosophies. It will appear in Friday's Trail-Gazette.

<p>Bill Ferguson (bill@eptrail.com).....Publisher Boots Gifford (editor@eptrail.com).....Managing Editor Jay Gentile (news@eptrail.com).....News Editor Lucie R. Willis (gnews@eptrail.com).....General News Editor Brian Johnson (Community@eptrail.com).....Community Editor Martin B. Hamilton(sports@eptrail.com).....Sports Editor Amy Lane (sales@eptrail.com).....Advertising Sales Representative Denise Novotny (sales@eptrail.com).....Advertising Sales Representative Paul Whyard (sales@eptrail.com).....Advertising Sales Representative Cathy Shaffer (sales@eptrail.com).....Advertising Assistant Tony Wedick(ads@eptrail.com).....Production Manager Liza Holdorf (ads@eptrail.com).....Graphic Design Chris Durrett (Chris@eptrail.com).....Circulation Manager Sarah Whalen(classifieds@eptrail.com).....Classified Manager Walt Hester (photo@eptrail.com).....Photographer Yoshiro Budo (photo@eptrail.com).....Photographer's Assistant Benjamin Leach.....Press Liaison Annette Ackerman.....Mail and Distribution/Single Copy Distributor</p> <p>Members of the Editorial Board are: Bill Ferguson, Boots Gifford, Amy Lane.</p> <p>Errors Policies: The Trail-Gazette will assume no obligation (other than cancellation of charges for the actual space occupied) for accidental errors in advertisements, but will be happy to furnish a signed letter to the buying public. The newspaper will correct factual errors in its news columns or add clarification if points requiring correction or clarification are reported to the managing editor.</p> <p>Letters Policy: Open forum communications will be accepted when signed by the writer and not libelous or in bad taste. All letters for publication must be signed and include a phone number for verification. Letters faxed or e-mailed from in-area writers will be accepted only if a phone number is included and verification by phone is made. Letters are limited to 300 words and writers are limited to one letter every 30 days. The Trail-Gazette reserves the right to edit any and all news copy, including letters to the editor.</p> <p>Subscription Rates: In Larimer, Boulder and Weld Counties.....\$32 per year Elsewhere in Colorado.....\$43 per year Outside of Colorado.....\$51 per year</p>	<p>© 2001 Estes Park Trail-Gazette, Estes Park, Colorado http://www.eptrail.com</p> <p>The Estes Park Trail-Gazette, (USPS 594820) succeeding the Estes Park Trail and the Mountain Gazette, is published every Wednesday and Friday. Estes Park Trail-Gazette mailing address is P.O. Box 1707, Estes Park, CO, 80517. Offices are located at 251 Moraine Ave., Estes Park, CO. Telephone (970) 586-3356, fax (970) 586-9532. Web site: http://www.eptrail.com, e-mail: editor@eptrail.com. Periodical postage paid at Estes Park, CO, 80517.</p> <p>POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Estes Park Trail-Gazette, P.O. Box 1707, Estes Park, CO, 80517.</p>	<p>1999 Colorado Press Association Awards: Best headline writing Best sustained coverage Best sports photo Best informational graphic Best advertising special section Best classified section Best editorial cartoons</p> <p>1998 National Newspaper Association Awards: Best letters to the editor grouping Best coverage of education Best feature story</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div>
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