

BCNA Educational Hike Series: Climate Change and Forests of Boulder County

Are you curious about how climate change has influenced wildfire activity and forest insect outbreaks in Boulder County? Have you ever wondered how scientists use tree rings to reconstruct fire history—and how fire activity under modern fire suppression compares to fire activity prior to fire suppression? Or how climate change is affecting tree regeneration after recent fires and driving increased mortality among mature trees?

Join **Tom Veblen**, CU Distinguished Professor Emeritus, and **Karl Ford**, BCNA Education Committee member, for a series of educational hikes exploring these themes in Boulder County's lower montane, upper montane, and subalpine forests.

The third hike in this series will focus on subalpine forests near the CU Mountain Research Station near Ward. We will visit some of the permanent forest plots where Tom Veblen's research group has been monitoring thousands of trees since the early 1980s. Through interactive discussions and firsthand observations, participants will gain insight into how peer-reviewed scientific findings apply to local forest conditions. We will also connect research conducted in the subalpine forests near the CU Mountain Research Station to broader patterns of climate impacts across Colorado and the western U.S.

This hike series is designed for conservation-minded nature enthusiasts who want to better understand how scientific evidence relates to messages about fire risk and forest management from national and local government and the media. Each hike will highlight key science-based knowledge of Boulder County forests and support informed public engagement on climate adaptation initiatives.

We will meet at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday June 10 at Buckingham Park in lower Lefthand Canyon and carpool to the CU Mountain Research Station. We will make one or two stops on the way to the MRS.

Participants must be capable of hiking (at a leisurely pace) from approximately 9500 to 10,400 feet on a rocky, moderately steep old mining road. It is yet to be determined if 4WD vehicles will be available to transport us for the first half of the uphill climb.

Participants need to be prepared for sudden weather changes (including the possibility of thunderstorms). Bring lunch and snacks, plenty of water, and sunscreen. No dogs or children please.

We will return to Buckingham Park by 5:00 p.m.

No fee. To register, email Tom at veblen@colorado.edu. Limit 14 participants. Please notify Tom if you need to cancel.