

Discovering Colorado's 14ers



Meet Your Instructors

Von Campbell

- 50+ unique summits spanning Colorado, the Himalayas, and Tanzania
- Highest climbing skill level: class 4
- Length of time climbing: four decades
- 2022 CFI Peak Steward of the Year

Mary O'Malley

- 70+ unique summits spanning Colorado and Oregon
- Wilderness First Aid certified
- Highest climbing skill level: class 4
- Length of time climbing: one decade
- 2019 CFI Peak Steward of the Year



Learning Objectives

- What is CFI?
- Alpine environment
- Resources
- What is a 14er?
- Safety
- The Ten Essentials
- Training
- Gear
- Beginner peaks
- Stewardship
- Where to go next?



Mt. Sneffels - August 2020

Colorado Fourteeners Initiative (CFI)

- Trail construction & maintenance
- Close/restore unsustainable routes
- Protection of the alpine
- Hiker education
- Community engagement
- Public land advocacy

“...to protect and preserve the 14,000-foot peaks through active stewardship and public education.”

www.14ers.org



**Colorado
Fourteeners
Initiative**

Life Zones: Where Are You Hiking?



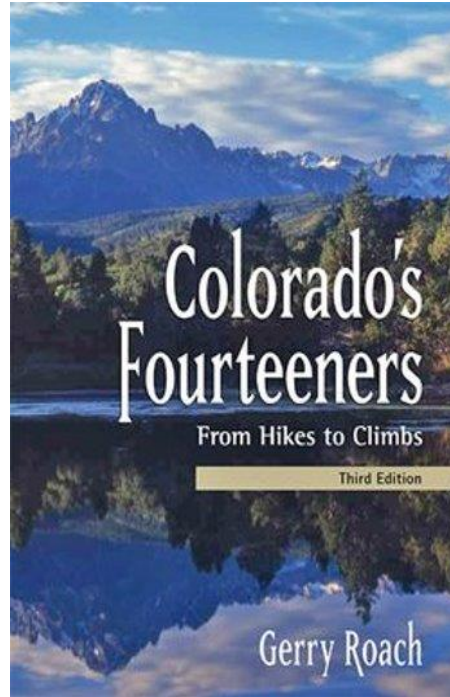
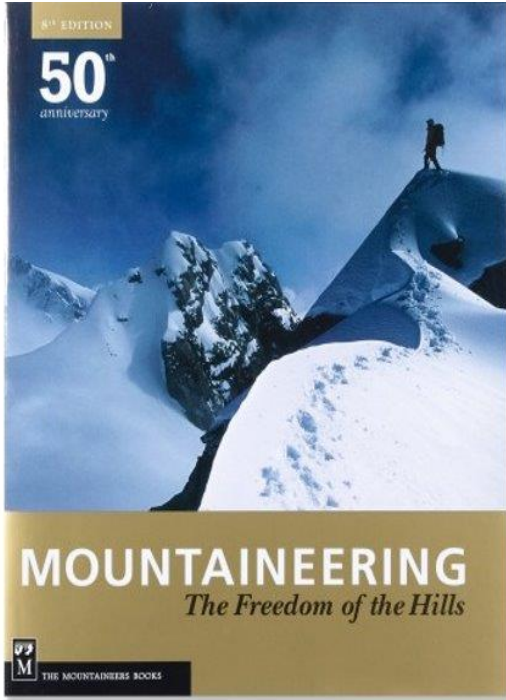
Realities of the Alpine

- High wind environment
- Low effective precipitation
- U.V. radiation 50% higher
- Temperature extremes
- Short growing season



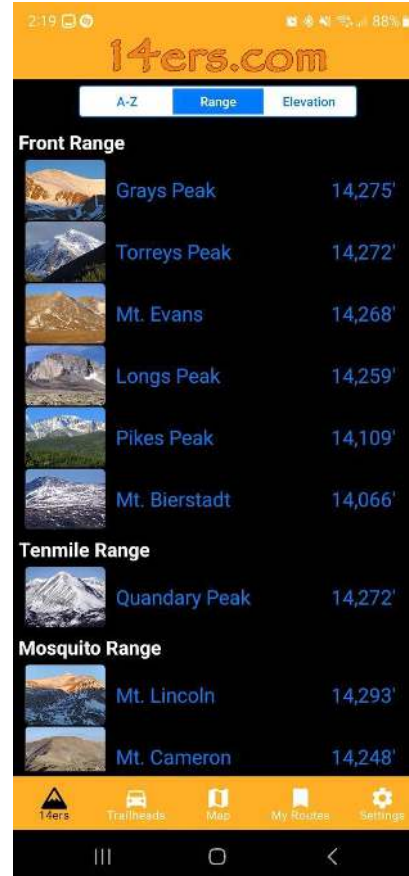
How does this impact the plants? the animals? and YOU?

Resources: Credible Sources



Resources: 14ers.com

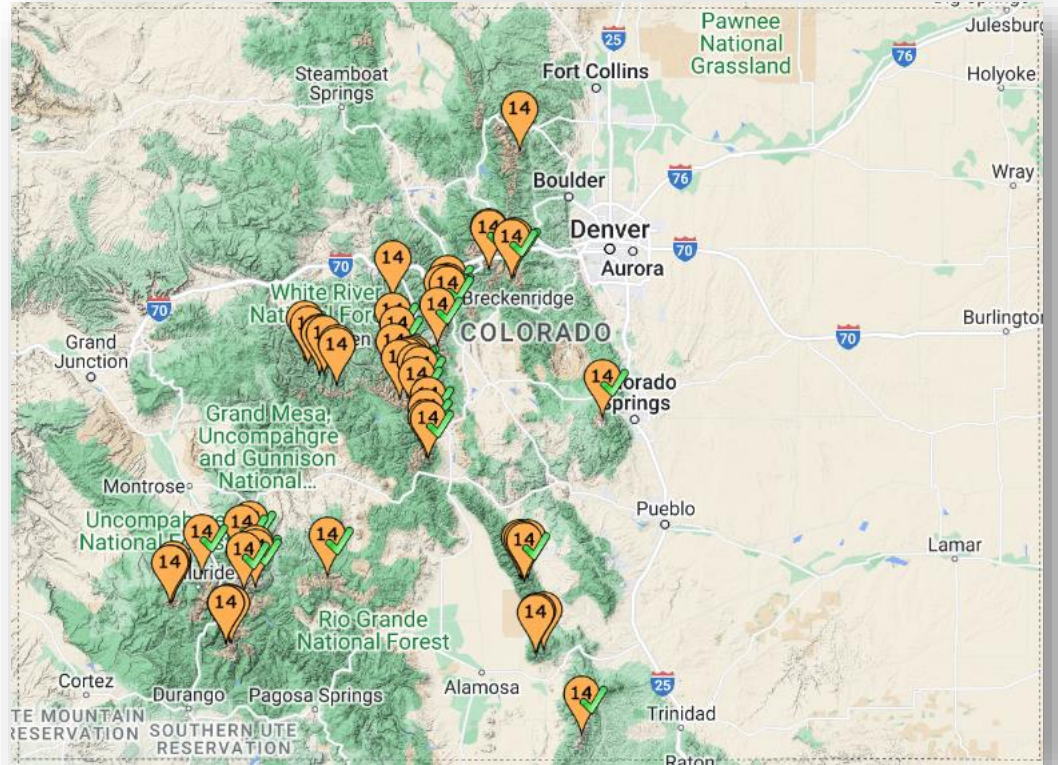
- *Caution: crowd-sourced resources (AllTrails, GAIA)*
- 14ers.com 14er routes are single-sourced
- Website as well as *free* app for Apple and Android
- Peak lists
- Route descriptions
- Route photos
- Trip reports
- Conditions updates
- Trailhead information



What is a 14er?

It's a mountain at least 14,000 feet high that is **at least 300 feet higher than the saddle** connecting it to a neighboring mountain.

There are 54 named *and* ranked 14ers in Colorado, and 58 total named (four of which are unranked).



The Rating System

Classes	
Class 1	Easy hiking, usually on a good trail
Class 2	More difficult hiking; can involve more talus/scree
Class 3	Scrambling; un-ropeed with occasional use of handholds
Class 4	Climbing; terrain is often more steep, dangerous, and consequential; falls can be fatal
Class 5	Technical climbing/rock climbing using rope and belay systems

The class of a route is determined by its most difficult move/section.

There are no easy 14ers!

Examples of Classes 1 – 2

Class 1



Class 2



Examples of Classes 3 – 4

Class 3



Class 4



Safety: Weather

- Start early! Plan to be off summit by 10 a.m., back to vehicle by the time storm activates.
- Hear thunder? Retreat!
- Seek to get as low as possible.
- Spread out if you're in a group.
- Crouch into lightning position, if necessary. (This is a judgment call.)



Safety: Exposure

- Sunscreen (SPF 30+)
- Blisters (shoes/moleskin)
- Altitude sickness
- Dehydration
- Hypothermia
- **Summit is only halfway**



Safety: Buddy System

- Two are better than one
- Conversation
- Emergency preparation



Safety: Route Finding

- Know/study your route
- Start on established trails
- Look for cairns (*caveat: verify!*)
- Keep group together
- Carry paper maps – and know how to read them
- Use GPS tools (e.g., 14ers.com tracker, GPX files uploaded into GAIA, etc.)



Emergencies

- *When in doubt, turn around!*
- Activate SOS if available
- Give first aid if needed
- Be visible and bright
- Stay in place unless in danger
- Remain calm
- Utilize ten essentials if needed



Gear “Extras”

- Pack
- Helmet
- Trekking poles
- Watch
- GPS
- inReach/PLB/SPOT
- Extra batteries
- Battery pack/power pack
- Prescription medications
- Glasses/contacts
- Phone
- Toilet paper
- Insect repellent/Permethrin
- Two-way radios



Microspikes



Trip Plan



Who is in your group?

- Everyone properly equipped?
- First-hand knowledge of the route?

What are the conditions?

- Weather forecast?
- Snow conditions?
- Route to the trailhead?

Where are you going?

- On Trail or Off Trail?
- Round Trip or Point to Point?
- Potential Campsites & Ranger Stations?

When will you be back?

- Estimated return time?
- **9-1-1 time?**
- Backup plan for delays?

**Your Trip Plan
should be left
with someone
at home
JUST IN
CASE**

Trip Plan (sample)

Time to call 911 if you've had no contact: _____

Name of Group Leader: _____

Names of Group Members: _____

Cellular Phone Numbers: _____

Departure Date/Time: _____

Return Date/Time: _____

Trailhead: _____

Drivers/Vehicles (color/year/make/model/registration): _____

Destination: _____

Route: _____

Weather Forecast: _____

Sunrise/Sunset/Moonrise (% moon illumination)/Moonset: _____

Outdoor Experience Level of the Group (1-5): _____

Medical Experience of the Group: _____

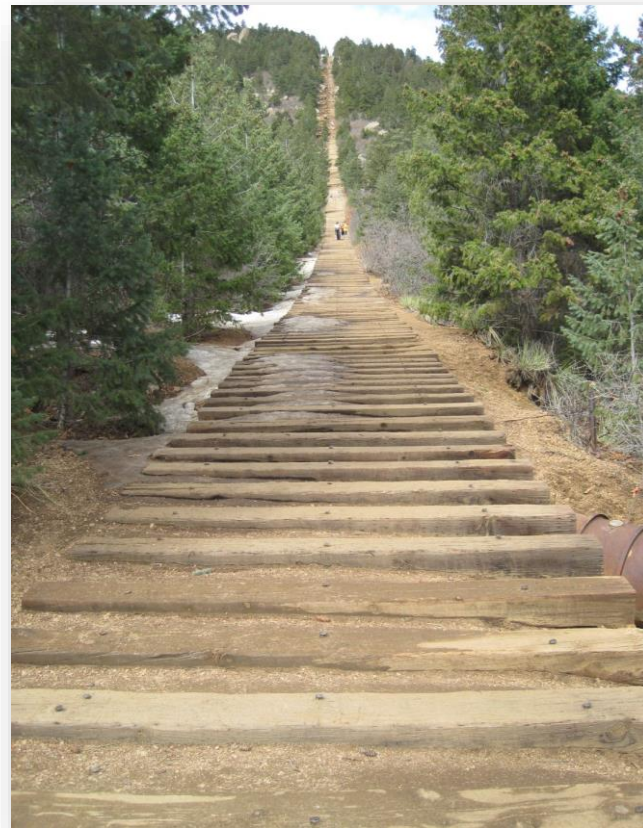
Emergency Equipment on hand: _____

Special Medical Conditions/Needs: _____

Additional information: _____

Training

- Hike! Walk hills!
- Manitou Springs Incline
- Small pack first
- Hikes with pack (20lbs)
- Break in footwear, if needed
- Acclimation regimen



Clothing

IMPORTANT! Our search and rescue friends recommend wearing bright colors!



Baselayer
(Merino wool
150 knit)



Tech T-Shirt
(Non-Cotton)



Fleece
(Non-Cotton)



Shell
(Wind/Rain)

Merino / Synthetic Socks!
(Darn Tough / Smartwool)

Footwear



Hiking Boots



Trail Running Shoes



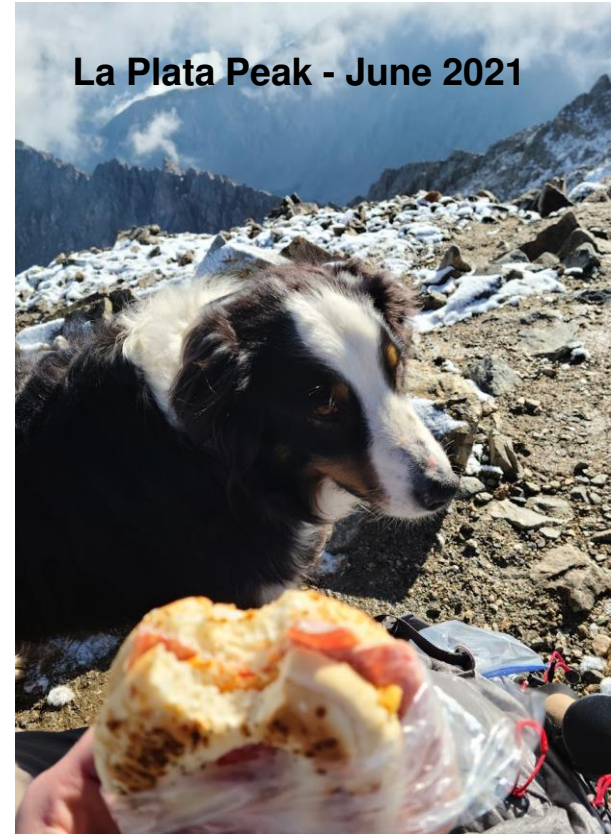
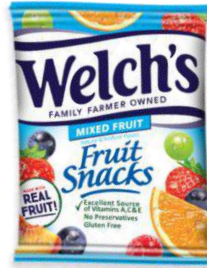
Approach Shoes



Mountaineering Boots

Find what works for you. Leave room for feet to expand. Buying a ½ size up from your normal size is recommended, and then learn some lacing techniques to prevent your feet from sliding around.

Nutrition



It can take a while to figure out what food you like to eat while hiking at altitude. Also bring food you'd normally eat at home, food you already know you enjoy!

Water Treatment

All backcountry water *must* be treated!

- **Boil:** slow, bulky, uses fuel, but kills everything
- **Chemical:** small, lightweight, *most* kill everything, but require wait time
- **Filter:** fast, wide variety, but most don't kill viruses
- **Ultra-violet light:** small, lightweight, fast, easy, “kills” everything, but not for dirty water





**Let's review some good beginner
14er options!**

Mount Sherman

Standard route (SW ridge):

- Elevation gain: 2,100ft
- Difficulty: class 1
- Distance: 5.25 miles RT



Mount Bierstadt

Standard route (west slopes):

- Elevation gain: 2,850ft
- Difficulty: class 2
- Distance: 7.25 miles RT



Quandary Peak

Standard route (east ridge):

- Elevation gain: 3,450ft
- Difficulty: class 1
- Distance: 6.75 miles RT



Pikes Peak

Northwest slopes route (“Craggs”):

- Elevation gain: 4,300ft
- Difficulty: class 2
- Distance: 14 miles RT

Standard route (Barr Trail):

- Elevation gain: 7,600ft
- Difficulty: class 1
- Distance: 24 miles RT



Grays & Torreys Peaks

Standard Combination Route (North Slopes/South Slopes):

- Elevation gain: 3,600ft
- Difficulty: class 1
- Distance: 8.25 miles RT



Dogs and 14ers:

An Important Message from Glacier the Bark Ranger



- Deciding to take your dog
- Why to use a leash
- Dog rescue
- Dogs vs. wildlife
- Dogs vs. plant life
- Dog waste



Leave No Trace

- Plan ahead and prepare
- Travel & camp on durable surfaces
- Dispose of waste properly
- Leave what you find
- Minimize campfire impacts
- Respect wildlife
- Be considerate of others



Just How Loved Are the 14ers?

Front Range	Best Est: 87,500
Longs Peak	10,000-15,000^
Pikes Peak	10,000-15,000*
Torreys Peak	15,000-20,000*
Grays Peak	
Mount Evans	10,000-15,000
Mount Bierstadt	30,000-35,000

Tenmile Range	Best Est: 22,000
Quandary Peak	20,000-25,000*

Sawatch Range	Best Est: 84,000
Mount Elbert	20,000-25,000*

Mosquito Range	Best Est: 32,000
Mount Lincoln	20,000-25,000*
Mount Cross	
Mount Democrat	
Mount Sherman	10,000-15,000*

2020: 415,000 hiker use days

2021: 303,000 hiker use days

2022: 279,000 hiker use days

That's why in 2023 CFI:

- Performed 2,000+ linear feet of maintenance on existing trails.
- Restored 7,375 square feet of affected terrain.
- Built 1,890 square feet of retaining walls.

What Can You Do To Help?

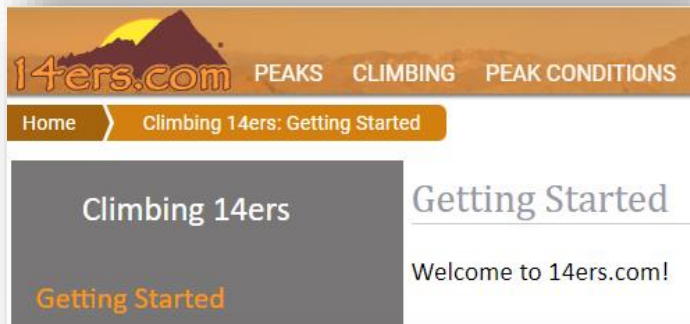
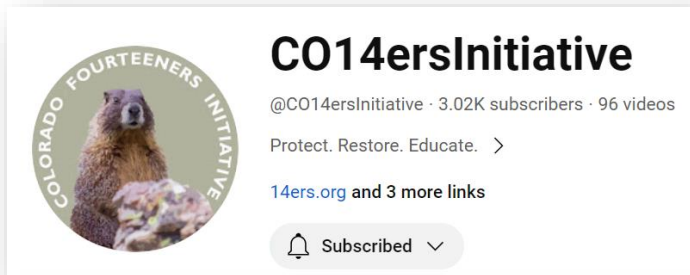
Taking care of public land is *everyone's* responsibility.

- *Get involved.* Trail maintenance, peak stewarding, donating.
- *Clean as you go.* Carry an extra trash bag.
- *Teach others.* Share information with friends and fellow hikers.
- *Lead by example.* Talk the talk, walk the walk!



Go Learn More!

- CFI's YouTube channel
 - Alpine ecology
 - Mountain safety
 - Mountain weather
 - Leave No Trace
- 14ers.com
 - "Getting Started" section
- AlpineRescueTeam.com
 - Safety & Education page





Questions?

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Little Bear Peak - Sept 2022