



Working to Preserve a Reasonable Balance

Preserve Unique Magnolia

A S S O C I A T I O N

P. U. M. A. Newsletter • Box 536 • Nederland, Colorado 80466

CELEBRATE WINTER TRADITIONS at the PUMA HOLIDAY POTLUCK!



We invite neighbors and friends of all faiths to join us at our annual winter potluck. If you have a tradition to share with the

community, feel free to bring materials (song sheets, musical instruments, a special dish, etc.)

WHEN: Saturday evening, December 15th

WHERE: Roz and John McClellan's
1567 Twin Sisters Road

WHAT: Potluck begins at 6:30 p.m. and continues the night. Carols and other traditions begin at 7:00 p.m.

WHAT TO DO: Bring a dish and/or beverage to share.

EARTH'S QUAKER

By Scott C. Reuman



Populus tremuloides, Quaking aspen, or sometimes-Golden aspen, is the most widely distributed tree in North America. Typically reaching

40-70' at maturity, aspen bark is white, green, tan, or even brown. Mammals browse on the bark, because the aspen stores a great deal of carbohydrate in its thin protective skin. Unlike the bark of conifers, aspen bark is alive, thus it stretches and grows with the tree and will gradually stretch over a scar caused by elk nibbling or bears scratching. The bark is photosynthetic, thus its usual greenish tinge. If scraped, nicked, chewed or scratched the soft bark is easily torn and opens the tree to infection, no different than torn skin.

Aspen grow quickly and are often the first to fill in where fire or humans have removed other trees, but in many places conifers usually begin to grow, then eventually shade out the aspen. "Climax" aspen stands do exist, however, right here in the Magnolia area. Aspen send out lateral roots, which sprout whole new trees from buds along each root. Usually these lateral roots sprout no more than a tree height to tree height and a half away from the parent tree, but have been known to sprout as far as 150' from the parent before sprouting or suckering, as it is usually known. It is this process of suckering that earns the title "clone" to aspen groves. It is quite common for all the trees in one grove to be of identical genetic origin, with all or most trees linked via the same root system.

Dr. Wayne Shepperd, aspen ecologist for the USDA Forest Service, was invited to discuss aspen ecology during a field trip in late

October. PUMA members, Boulder County Open Space staff, Forest Service personnel, and others met at the first stop, a small, roadside grove of aspen at about mile 11 on Magnolia. Here, an aspen stand surrounds a grassy lowland, often a shallow pond in spring. Dr. Shepperd pointed out that the aspen here might try to sucker in the grassy wetland but usually drown. Aspen, apparently, like it wet, but not too wet.

Shepperd described aspen stands as being "self-thinning," something obvious when comparing a dense, young aspen clone and a more mature grove. There might be thousands of stems per acre when the grove is young and suckering vigorously. As disease and weather take their toll, so do internal mechanisms. As the trees mature they secrete a hormone, auxin that suppresses new growth. Only when the connection between mature trees and root systems is severed will the flow of auxin diminish and root buds begin to sprout again. This reaction can be forced by cutting down the mature stand (e.g., for forestry products), through destruction by fire (yes, aspen can burn...more on that later), or by "root ripping," a process of disconnecting the mature trees from their lateral roots, which then rapidly send up new shoots. Occasionally this happens naturally, for example when gophers chew through aspen roots in search of food, unwittingly starting new aspen skyward. But thinning aspen is never recommended. Unlike many conifers, which can grow densely but will usually grow more vigorously if some of the competing trees are removed, aspen have found a critical balance; literally a balance with nature. By growing many stems in a small area, the weak aspen trunks offer a mutual arboreal support society. In the event of heavy snows, all those trees are like lots of people stuffed together in a crowded hall -- no one can fall over because there's someone (or some tree) close to lend support. Dr. Shepperd shared a tale of experimental forestry where he thinned a small portion of a large aspen clone

and during the winter the entire 20-acre grove fell and was destroyed.

Because aspen contain large quantities of water and have non-resinous leaves, they are considered a natural firebreak. When considering how to treat your own property for wildfire mitigation, aspen recruitment is often one of the recommended tactics. If you can get them to grow, they offer some measure of protection while still providing summer shade. Solar homes benefit from aspen, of course -- the shade helps cool a home during summer, but with winter defoliation the solar influx is renewed. Caution is advised on your aspen recruitment strategy, though.

Aspen can burn when they are dormant, in the fall when fire danger can still be high. Root ripping or cutting mature trees in hopes of stimulating tenth acre or less from the aspen grove often do not stimulate expansion of the clone and once suckers appear, elk and other hungry critters need to be fenced out. Dr. Shepperd reminded us that aspen requires the following three things for successful growth: 1) the right environment (with proper amounts of light and water), 2) hormonal stimulation, and 3) protection from predators.

When settlers first arrived in the Boulder area just after the middle of the 19th Century, wood was used for cooking, building, tool making, and mine timbering. Trees were used for everything, and if they got in the way, prospectors might ignite a valley's forests to see if any promising rock lay hidden. At the beginning of the 20th Century, old, large conifers were mostly gone and only spindly young ones remained, along with a rapidly increasing aspen population. Over the course of the next one hundred years, conifer have grown up and often shaded out the aspen stands. Dr. Shepperd was fairly confident that today's total aspen acreage along the Front Range is similar to that of pre-settlement, although the previous acreage would often fluctuate with the large

fires that no longer happen along the Front Range.

All in all, *Populus tremuloides* is a popular tree; for its summer quaking leaves and welcome shade, its fire resistance, and for spectacular fall color displays and valuable wildlife habitat. While it is sometimes deemed "closer to grass than a tree," aspen ecology reveals that its life and life cycle is much more complex than a lawn of Kentucky Blue.

SNAGS: THE IMPORTANCE OF STANDING DEAD TREES---OR WAIT! SAVE DEAD TREES!

(Excerpts taken with permission from article by Dave Hallock in *Journal of the Colorado Field Ornithologists*; Vol. 35, No. 2 April 2001)



Snags are standing dead trees. The residents of the Magnolia area have been rightly concerned with taking down trees infected with the Pine Bark Beetle and treating them in the time period before

the beetles have flown. We have good reason on our small and adjacent acreages to prevent spreading the beetle in this suburban (it is true) mountain environment. BUT should we have missed that critical period or should we have trees dead from other causes, it is important to our wildlife community, especially our bird life, to allow these "snags" to remain.

"One dead tree is worth a thousand living trees to many animals." While the source of this quote is unknown it underlines the value of snags in our forests. Snags are used by birds to meet many basic behavioral and physiological needs, including nesting, drumming, roosting, feeding, perching, hawking, and singing, use snags. Some birds such as woodpeckers and nuthatches excavate their own cavities; others use the abandoned holes already made by the first group. Living trees as well as snags can be

suitable for cavity nesting if they have very soft heartwood (often caused by infection by heart rot fungus). Snags, older living trees, trees recently burned or killed by other agents or trees easily damaged (as aspen) are prime candidates for this fungus and eventual cavity excavation. The presence of snags greatly enhances the opportunities for cavity-nesting birds. The number of snags in an area is felt to be a good predictor of cavity nesting bird densities.

Colorado has 41 confirmed species of cavity nesting birds. These comprise 15 to 40% of the breeding birds in Colorado's woodlands and forests. In winter the percentage is even higher. On the Indian Peaks Four Season Bird Counts (done now for almost 20 years), cavity nesters usually comprise 18% of observed birds in the summer, but 40% in the winter.

Evidence suggests that snags provide important thermodynamic protection to wintering birds and are heavily used.

Snags can be excellent sites for the foraging of insects by birds. The snags provide food and shelter for the birds. The birds, in turn, help to control the insect population in both dead and living trees. Some species favor snags over living trees as perches. Olive-sided Flycatchers generally sing while perched on a snag or a dead limb.

Birds are not the only benefactors of snags.

Eight of the 18 species of bats known to Colorado use cavities in snags and trees for summer and/or daytime roosts. Raccoons, Ringtails, Bushy-tailed wood rats are among the mammals, which use hollows in snags.

Finally, when snags fall over their value to animals takes on a whole new posture. They can be used for drumming and foraging by birds. They provide hiding cover or may help in the formation of under-snow pathways for small mammals. They tend to retain moisture and provide a wetter microhabitat, benefiting a host of animals and plants, until their decay finally returns them to nourish the soil.

Because of various land use and aesthetic and other considerations, it is probable that significant portions of Colorado forests have lower snag densities, particularly of high-quality, large-diameter snags than cavity-nesting birds enjoyed in previous centuries. The minimum standards now set by public entities are for example, 3 snags per acre with a minimum diameter of 10 inches and favor retention of 3 or more declining or dying trees/acre and protecting snags from blow down by keeping clumps of other large trees around them. The problem with minimum standards is that they tend to become the norm. Aim higher!

The surest place to make an impact is on your own land. Set the example by retaining that dead tree and explain the reasons to your neighbors. Put a little sign on it saying "Wildlife Tree". The birds won't need the sign, but friends and neighbors might!

(The original article had more information on snags and provided resource references for determining the proper amount and distribution of snags. Cherie Long has the original publication).

2. Boating capacity (numbers) will not be limited.

There were many good controls included in the Rec Plan:

1. Boating season and daily hours were proposed (Memorial Day - Sept 30, sunrise to sunset) and opposed by the new user group present (Boulder Sea Kayak Club) who want year- round access.
2. Limited parking — a total of one hundred parking spots — was proposed to control overall use. PUMA was concerned this would only promote on/off-road parking and double/illegal parking and not necessarily limit the numbers. The Sea Kayak Club once again fought to have more parking available specifically for their use.
3. Daily use fees were proposed in the form of parking fees.
4. A boat size limit was proposed (18') and the Sea Kayakers wanted that raised to 26' or more. (There was little discussion on this.)

Gross Reservoir Draft Recreational Plan



A public meeting took place 11/13/01 to discuss the Draft Recreational Plan for Gross

Reservoir. PUMA has worked long and hard to minimize ecosystems. Last night a new group showed up in force requesting that their needs be addressed. As this is always a "numbers game," your help with a brief letter is invaluable to address some issues:

As the Draft Rec Plan was unveiled (this is its first presentation) these issues were pointed out as the most problematic and contentious:

1. Funding for enforcement of any/all policies is not assured.

Please take a moment to write a letter in support of the proposed:

1. The proposed boating season (Mem Day - Sept 30) is an effective way to limit harmful impacts on the recreational resource and nearby critical wildlife habitat.
2. The boat size limit of 18 feet or less for all boats should be retained. This limit is based on access roads, turn-a-rounds, and a State boating class size appropriate for use on a reservoir of this size/location.
3. Funding for policy enforcement **MUST BE ASSURED**. A quote by a Denver Water official [Neil Sperandeo: "Cost of enforcement is higher than we're willing to pay"] strongly suggests that this Rec Plan

will be implemented but never enforced. This recreation plan should not be implemented if no funding exists for enforcement.

If you are a nearby resident, you will see major impacts from an un-controlled recreational melee. If you are a member of Search & Rescue teams, you will be called upon to haul people from icy waters and extinguish campers' fires. If you wish to preserve even small segments of landscape for wildlife habitat, write a letter now. Address your concerns to:

Leslie Parker
Denver Water Board
1600 West 12th Ave.
Denver, Colorado 80254

RE: Gross Reservoir Hydroelectric Project
(FERC No. 2035), Draft Recreational Plan

Many thanks to: Dan M., Jennifer S., Lynda C., Rosalie B., and Bonnie S. for their attendance at the meeting and their cogent remarks.

PUMA KIOSK



The PUMA kiosk is finally here! You might have noticed a small kiosk/message board on the left-hand side of Magnolia Road just after you hit the pavement on your way to

Boulder. This is YOUR resource for posting For Sale and For Rent signs, announcing events, locating lost pets, finding carpooling partners or housemates, advertising or requesting services etc. Feel free to post your dated notices on the left-hand side of the kiosk message board. The right-hand side will feature PUMA articles, news clippings and information of interest to the community, and announcements for public meetings. A list of telephone numbers and agency contacts will be posted so residents can address specific problems or concerns. The kiosk will also feature informational

brochures on wildlife, weed eradication, fire mitigation and other topics.

The kiosk will also serve as a site for data collection on problems in our area: trail and 4wd road abuse issues, trespass, dumping, litter and noise problems etc. You can stop by the kiosk to record information on provided data sheets. Information will be compiled later by PUMA volunteers and if necessary, sent to the appropriate agencies. You can also list questions or concerns to be responded to later by PUMA or provide other information such as wildlife sightings.

The PUMA kiosk was a real community effort. PUMA applied for a grant from the Neighborhood Resource Center of Denver. Ken Leonard designed the kiosk and George Blakey secured permission for the kiosk's location and constructed it. The success of the project was a result of cooperation among the Neighborhood Resource Center, Boulder County Department of Transportation and the Colorado State Forest Service.

We hope that both residents and visitors will stop by the kiosk to post messages and learn more about the unique attributes of the Magnolia community!

Remembering the Life of Edith Scates

(November 11, 1907 – October 17, 2001)

October 17, 2001 marked the passing of an era on Magnolia Road: Edith Scates, its longest resident, died at the age of 93 at the ranch where she was born.

In 1885, Edith's great-aunt acquired the homestead on mile 7 of Magnolia Road. Edith's father, a self-educated businessman, bought out many of the other homesteaders. He had acquired 3,100 acres by the time Edith and her younger brother, Dick, were born in the small cabin that still exists on the ranch. In 1920, the family built a log cabin where Edith

lived most of her life, with hand-hewn logs that were brought by horse-drawn wagon.

The Scates family eventually bought up 5,000 acres of land for ranching. They had 200 head of cattle, raised chickens, cut timber to make "coal props" for the mines nearby, grew hay, farmed potatoes and had a large vegetable garden. Life on the ranch was demanding and the family did not have electricity or running water while Edith and Dick were growing-up. They hauled well water up the hill to their home.

Edith attended Pine Glade School, which was located at the present Boy Scout Trail, but has been relocated near the old Nederland Elementary School. Edith attended dances at the school, which sometimes kept her out as late as 4:00 a.m., just in time to have breakfast and return to the ranch to do the chores.

Edith graduated from St. Gertrude's Academy in Boulder and spent a few years at Emily Griffith Opportunity School in Denver. She left the ranch for only a short time in her early 20's when she worked as a typesetter at Coors. Although she had interested suitors, Edith didn't ever marry because it just wasn't the "right time or place."

Edith returned home in 1942, after her father died, to help her mother and brother run the ranch. Edith and Dick both took care of the cattle, cut and stacked the hay and attended to the business of the ranch. Dick slaughtered the cattle himself and drove the meat to Rollinsville. Edith drove the truck during cattle drives and stopped the traffic. One time, when her brother and mother were in the hospital with pneumonia, Edith continued to operate the ranch with the help of neighbors even though she felt ill too. She described cattle ranching as "very confining, no vacations, hard work", yet "fascinating" and "with its satisfactions." Edith learned to drive on the "Oh My God" road

to Idaho Springs before it was improved. This must have been good training for surviving Magnolia Road for so long.

In 1969, Edith and Dick sold all of their land, except for 160 acres. The land they sold formed the subdivisions of Aspen Meadows, Lazy Z and Twin Sisters. When Dick died in 1984, he was buried on the property, and now Edith is buried by his side. Edith was a member of the Colorado Cowbells Association, Christian Women in Service and an elder in the Nederland Community Presbyterian Church. She loved animals, including "Fatso" the squirrel who lived on her porch.

A few years ago, Edith made sure that the property she loved would remain a ranch forever by gifting a conservation easement to the Colorado Cattleman's Association ("CCA"), who, in turn, extinguished the development rights. The conservation easement does allow for enlargement of the existing house and a new caretaker dwelling, not to exceed 4,000 square feet, which may be built in the northeast corner of the property. All residential structures must be constructed and maintained in a style, which is consistent with the log ranch house in which Edith lived. The CCA will have stewardship of the open space character, agricultural productivity, wildlife habitat, and scenic qualities of the property. In the event that the CCA ceases to exist, then the easement will become vested in another qualified organization. The people of Magnolia Road have much to be thankful for because the Scates Ranch will be preserved, and along with it, the memories of a special woman named Edith.

By Julia Chase with special thanks to Marianne Stiltson, Julie Harris and Janet Kuepper for sharing their notes of Edith's memories collected over the past 3 years.

BURNING SLASH



If you wish to burn slash, you need to secure an Open Burning Permit from the Boulder County Health Department (303) 441-1100. The following information is taken from the application.

IV. Conditions/Restrictions:

1. Standard Slash Burns: March 1st - October 31st (Spring/Summer/Fall)
2. Materials to be burned include ONLY clean, dry slash (branches) less than 3" in diameter. **NO household trash, weeds, leaves, stumps, or lumber shall be burned.**
3. Contact Boulder County Communications at (303) 411-4444 and your local fire department before and after the burn.
4. Please call the Air Quality Bulletin at (303) 782-0211 for the daily burn index or window.

5. All burning activities must be started at least 2 hours after sunrise and must be completely extinguished by 2 hours before sunset (refer to local paper for sunrise and sunset times).
6. The permit shall be made available without unreasonable delay upon request of appropriate officials for inspection.
7. During publicly announced periods of an air pollution emergency, alert, or burning bans, all permits will be suspended in the alert areas. Please call the Air Pollution Forecast at (303) 758-4848 if you are burning between March 1st and March 31st to determine if it is a RED or BLUE Air Pollution Advisory. Burning is prohibited during a RED Advisory.
8. No burn permits will be issued for the Coal Creek Canyon Fire Protection District unless there are at least four (4) inches of snow on the ground. Please call (303) 642-3121 for more information.