



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Black Canyon of the  
Gunnison National Park  
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Recreation Area  
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# Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park News Release

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## **Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park Celebrates 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Wilderness Act**

Montrose, CO – Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park is celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act through a variety of talks, walks and special events on September 3, 2014.

On September 3, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Wilderness Act into law. This established the National Wilderness Preservation System and set aside an initial 9.1 million acres of federal land for the use and benefit of the American people. Over the past 50 years, Congress has added more than 100 million acres to this system. Wilderness designation provides the greatest level of permanent protection for Wilderness values such as adventure, solitude, clean air and water, scenery, wildlife, and scientific understanding of how the natural world works when left alone. Wilderness areas are found in National Park Service areas, National Forests, National Wildlife Refuges, and National Conservation Lands.

Did you know that Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park has areas designated as Wilderness? Black Canyon is a place to experience many Wilderness values, whether on your own, with friends and family, or through ranger-led activities. For more information about special events celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act, call 970-249-1914, ext. 423 or go on-line at [www.nps.gov/blca](http://www.nps.gov/blca) or [www.facebook.com/BlackCanyonNPS](http://www.facebook.com/BlackCanyonNPS).

(full list of events below)

Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act at Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park September 3, 2014.

**WILDERNESS VOICES All Day** - post your thoughts on wilderness at the Black Canyon Facebook page for our continuing series: Wilderness Wednesday, or stop at the South Rim Visitor Center to post your thoughts on our Wilderness Board at the front door.

**ROCK STOMP, 10:00 AM:** Meet Ranger Mary Jane at the South Rim Visitor Center for a one hour walk that answers geologic questions about the natural forces that shaped this wilderness canyon.

**TRUE GRIT, 11:00 AM:** Take a measure of the character of people who explored the wilderness of Black Canyon a hundred years ago. Ranger Mike shares these stories at Chasm View during this 20 minute program.

**WILDERNESS BIRTHDAY, 1:00 PM:** Celebrate the day by stopping at the South Rim Visitor Center for cake and wilderness reflections with rangers.

**WILDFIRE AND WILDERNESS, 2:00 PM:** Fire is a hot topic, but part of the rhythm of wilderness. Join Ranger Bri to learn about fire's role in the wild lands of Colorado during this 20 minute program at Chasm View.

**WALK ON THE WILD SIDE, 2:30 PM:** Join a moderately strenuous ranger-led hike and explore the wilderness depths of Black Canyon on this 1.5 hour program. The Oak Flat Trail winds up and down forested slopes into a wilderness canyon like no other.

**ASTRONOMY THROUGH YOUR OWN EYES, 8:00 PM:** The heavens are filled with spectacular sights you can see with your own eyes! Join Ranger Zach in the South Rim Amphitheater to learn about the wilderness nature and values which you can experience yourself in the night sky.

**TELESCOPE VIEWING, 9:00 PM:** Join members of the Black Canyon Astronomical Society to learn more about specific constellations, planets and stars in the night sky. Feel the wilderness up close, and how our planet fits within the cosmos.



#### NPS

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