

THE NUGGETEER



March 2025

Vol.5 No.2

A Message from the President Tim's Tidbits

Hello members and prospectors when working on a river inside bends like a fishing hole to find the gold.

Tim Pitney
President COSGPAA

Web address: <http://cosgpaa.org>

Facebook address closed <https://www.facebook.com/groups/733783243720768/members/>

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Tonight's precious metals spot prices per Troy ounce

Year	Gold	Silver	Platinum	Palladium	Rhodium
2024	\$2,159.60	\$24.39	\$917.35	\$1,082.00	\$4,600.00
2025	\$2,928.70	\$32.80	\$984.90	\$980.95	\$5,100.00

3/8/2025

1

GPAA

COLORADO SPRINGS CHAPTER



GPAA OFFICERS Colorado Springs Chapter

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MEETING MINUTES



March 5, 2025, COSGPAA Meeting Minutes

Attendees: 23 in person; 152 by e-mail

The March monthly meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm by Chapter President Tim Pitney and began with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Tim welcomed new members and guests: John May, John Baumchen, Mark McGee and Steve Kelly. Tim explained the procedures for the evenings Show & Tell event and opened a discussion on where and when we would hold our first outing for the season. Weather permitting, our first outing will be on the Arkansas River claims at the Railroad Bridge Campground in Buena Vista, CO, May 2-4, 2025. The early May dates were picked to avoid conflict with the Gold Prospectors of Colorado (GPOC) annual *Poker Run & Let's Go Panning* events on Mothers' Day weekend May 10th and 11th; school graduation events during the month; and Buena Vista's Memorial Day weekend events May 24, 25 & 26. Prior to the start of rafting season on Memorial Day weekend water levels in the Arkansas River are periodically elevated to flush out debris and then maintained high through Labor Day weekend, September 1st. Spring run-off and rainstorms along with rafting levels make the river difficult to access for prospecting and dangerous. The possibility of an outing in April will be decided at that month's meeting.

MEETING MINUTES



March 5, 2025, COSGPAA Meeting Minutes (continued)

Treasurer Alton Oakes gave the financial report and an update on the Alaska trip. Alton received the Skookum welcome packet just prior to the meeting and will be sending copies to participants. Member Richard Cook is still looking for someone to replace him on the trip which is 19-26 August 2025. Please call Richard at 719-271-2694, or Alton at 719-439-3590.

At 7:40 pm, the pizza delivery arrived, and the Show & Tell event began. Stop #1 was Member Steve Hench. Steve made a long-handled scoop for cleaning out the corrugations (think ruffles) of drainage pipes, an auger and bucket for collecting stream samples, and an underwater view tube.

Stop #2 was President Pitney who demonstrated a 24" underwater, lighted view tube.

Stop #3 was Member Del Cox. Del showed two sluices with multiple interchangeable collection media and accessories.

Stop #4 was Member Jim Fairclough. Jim demonstrated a recirculating clean-up gutter-sluice which he assembled and how to build your own.

MEETING MINUTES



March 5, 2025, COSGPAA Meeting Minutes (continued)

Chapter Chairs Lorraine Sirois and Teresa Bailey handled the voting and tabulation. Prizes were awarded for 1st, 2^d and 3rd place, see photos in the Nuggeteer.

After the door prize drawing the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Thank you again to those who helped with the meeting set up and teardown. Thanks also to Pat Oakes, Lorraine Sirois for providing baked goods.

DOOR PRIZE WINNERS March 5, 2024

Gold: Winners, Jon Ray, Steve Sprague, John Baumchen, Del Cox

Silver: Winners, Richard Stockton, Dave Wheeler, Tim Pitney, John Baumchen

Hand Dredge Daryl Barnett

Demo First Place Steve Hench, Second Place Jim Fairclough, Third Place Del Cox

GPAA

COLORADO SPRINGS CHAPTER

COLORADO SPRINGS GPAA CHAPTER MEETINGS

Meetings are held on the First Wednesday of each month

From 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM at:

The Salvation Army building:

208 Cunningham Drive

Security, CO 80911

All General Meetings are the 1st Wednesday of each month from 7pm to 9:00pm

MEETING DATES

April 2 2025

May 7 2025

June 4 2025

July 2 2025

August 6 2025

September 3 2025

October 1 2025

November 5 2025

December 3 2025

The Nuggeteer is published monthly following the regularly scheduled chapter meetings. It will be distributed by email and posted to the Chapter web site. To be added to or removed from our email list, please send your request to cosgpaahospitalitycommittee@gmail.com. To add an article please submit it to the editor at cosgpaahospitalitycommittee@gmail.com.



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- PLP Golden Paydirt Bag	\$200
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Demo Projects



First Place Steve Hench



Second Place Jim Fairclough

Third Place Del Cox



News and Updates

Categories: [PRODUCT REVIEW](#)

Thursday, November 18, 2021

Mountain Goat Trommel

'Eats anything and goes anywhere'



You're standing in your workshop looking over buckets of concentrates you've collected over the last mining season or concentrates that you've already run once. Looking at your gold wheel, the first thought that comes to mind is, 'This is going to take all winter.' Maybe you're out in the field, and you want to do more than pan to test an area, or you've gotten a nice spot with gold and you're thinking, 'Is it easier to take the concentrates back to camp, or should I work them here?'

If you have faced any of these scenarios, you should look at the Camel Mining Products Mountain Goat Trommel. And, if you have never been faced with these choices, then you are either a metal detectorist or you just have not been getting out and doing enough prospecting.

When Angus Niccolls, the late and great founder of Camel Mining Products, developed the Mountain Goat Trommel, he did so with a lot of experience behind him. In his earlier years, Niccolls had worked with large trommel units with large professional mining companies and was keenly aware of their recovery and their pitfalls.

So, when he sat down to design a unit to which he would eventually brand with the Camel Mining name, Niccolls knew that it would have to be lightweight, extremely portable and offer high-yield recovery. The result was the Mountain Goat. As for the name, Niccolls said he chose Mountain Goat because it, "Eats anything and goes anywhere."

Over the years, Camel Mining Products has become synonymous with innovation and quality. The first spiral gold wheels to gain mass popularity were Camel Wheels, and today the Camel Desert Fox remains a top seller in spiral recovery. The last innovation Niccolls developed before he died was the Mountain Goat. And, when he proudly delivered it into the hands of gold prospectors, he knew he had given miners a product they would be able to use for years to come.

I truly miss Angus, and I wonder what he would've come up with next. One thing for sure, it would have had to be of the quality the mining community had come to expect from the Camel Mining name.

The Mountain Goat Trommel is not new to the prospecting industry by any means. It has a long history of excellent recovery and ease of use. The trommel can be as simple as setting it at the factory presets and recovering gold. Or you can fine-tune the unit easily to capture the finest gold that is gravity recoverable.

I've used the Mountain Goat on my Alaska concentrates on many occasions, and with amazing success. With just a small amount of fine-tuning and closely watching my tailings at start-up, the Mountain Goat has never let me down. For years, it has been one of my "go-to" pieces of equipment that I continue to use to capture and recover gold.

The Archimedean screw concept

The Mountain Goat is a variant of the Archimedean screw, which is a tube surrounding a rotating screw used to pull a column of water up a grade. This makes it possible to easily lift water. In the Mountain Goat, the outer tube is lined with the screw, and as gold-bearing material is stratified by a stream of water and run through tube, the heavier gold-bearing material is deposited into the reverse screw and brought to the top of the unit. The lighter waste material is continually washed and pushed through the unit into the tailings.

In other words, when material enters the hopper, the gold goes one direction, and the waste goes the other. It sounds simple enough. In this way, it's no different than other true trommels. The greatest difference is that the Mountain Goat does all of this in a unit that weighs less than 20 pounds, recirculates about 10 gallons of water all day long. And, if properly set up, it can handle about two yards of material in a long day of running.

I will be perfectly honest with you — I've never used the unit to run that much material in a day, but in all my years using the unit I've never been left wanting for more production or better recovery.

Unboxing the Mountain Goat Trommel

Although I've owned a Mountain Goat for several years, Angus's widow, Alicia Niccolls, wanted to send me a new clean unit for the test. And, as usual, I did not read the enclosed directions on assembly. It must be intuitive to me, or I will deduct points. The Mountain Goat will be completely as intuitive for you as it was for me when I bought my unit years ago.

The Mountain Goat is cleverly designed. It's compact and almost completely assembled when you receive it. The carry handle is molded into the unit, making it easy to transport from location to location. And the entire unit will fit on the front rack of just about any quad I've ever ridden. The trommel tube is pre-mounted to the unit with the nugget trap installed needing no further assembly. The legs are collapsible and can be set to two different heights. Plus, the front legs are further adjustable to allow you to fine-tune the unit to the material you're working.

The pump is 12-volt, and the flow rate was chosen to offer the best recovery possible. I will always suggest that a filter of some sort be used on the pumps inlet side to assure that you do not draw trash into the system causing clogs and lost time. The recovery trap sits on the unit and does not require any mounting tools. The hopper slides into the trommel and uses wing nuts mounted to stabilizer bars that quickly connect the entire assembly together. Put the Mountain Goat in a large black tub if you're using it as a recirculating unit, add water, hook it up to a battery and you are ready to run material ... ALMOST.

Setting up the trommel

This unit is made of plastic and a great deal of it is molded, meaning that there is release agent on almost every surface. Prior to using your unit for the first time — or before using it after sitting for some time — please for the sake of your recovery, clean the unit. Use hot water in your tub with a little dishwashing detergent that does not contain citrus scents. Hook up the unit and allow the soapy water to do its job. Use a sponge to wipe down all surfaces that are exposed to water and the outer case of the unit. This includes the recovery trap as well.

Do not lose your gold because of oil that you could have prevented by taking a few minutes in preparing your Mountain Goat. You wouldn't use an un-seasoned pan, would you?

A few words of warning: Please clean your unit outside. When you have hot soapy water and run it through a pump you end up with something that looks like the neighbor's fountain when someone (and I'm not saying I ever did this as a kid) dumped soap in it.

Running material

The manual states that the Mountain Goat will handle 1/2-inch-minus material with the optimal recovery being material that has been classified to 1/4-inch. Not an issue for me. I will always classify my material to the smallest number that does not leave most of my gold in the classifying screen.

I am also a major proponent of only operating wet equipment with wet material — meaning wet on wet. Introducing dry material into any type of final recovery unit that is smaller than a six-foot wash plant should always have the material entering the system in at least a slurry.

I placed the Mountain Goat with the legs set to the factory position of the lowest setting into the largest black mixing tub available at my local building supply and filled the tub to about half full of water (with another five-gallon bucket ready to add water), dropped the pump into the water, hooked it to the battery and began pumping water. I placed the three-gallon tailing bucket under the nugget trap and allowed it to fill with water and then added additional water to the tub to keep the pump well under the water.

Then, I added a small amount of surfactant to the water — not soap, but surfactant. Soap is a cleaner while surfactant is a wetting agent that breaks the surface tension of the water, and it is very important to use this in recirculating systems unless directed otherwise by a manufacturer.

Preparing the material

With the unit ready, it was time to prepare material. Two five-gallon buckets that I had screened to 1/4 dry, I took out- side and began wetting. Sticking a hose into the buckets and decanting off the muck, I was left with a little over six gallons of concentrated material.

Decanting the last of the water off the material and leaving it wet, I used a standard green scoop to feed the first of the material into the Mountain Goat. I had placed a gold pan on top of the tailing bucket to be able to spot check the first couple of scoops of material.

After running the test material, I checked the gold pan and the recovery trap. The pan did not contain any gold. But the recovery trap not only had a few specks of gold in the tray, it also had a great deal of unwanted black sands as well.

This let me know instantly that I needed to increase the angle of the unit to allow more of the unwanted material to pass through it. Turning the tuning screws on the front legs and rechecking the material, I quickly got the Mountain Goat to the proper angle where I was recovering very little black sands in the recovery trap while still preventing gold from dropping out into the tailings. I was ready to run volume.

I timed myself to a wet scoop of material every 15 seconds, and I fed the hopper rather than dumping the material into the unit while constantly checking my gold pan for loss. When I was not seeing any loss in the pan, I increased my feed rate slightly to one scoop every 10 seconds of wet material. Still no loss. I did, at one point, pull off the nugget trap, letting the material drop into my pan. I found one piece of very flat small gold which convinced me the unit was working exactly as expected. Larger or in some cases very flat pieces of gold will not be trapped in the reverse helix of the trommel. In the case of the Mountain Goat, these larger pieces of gold are caught in the nugget trap. After running my material, the recovery trap had about a quarter-cup of gold rich concentrates ready for the next step in final recovery. I regularly use the Mountain Goat and my Camel Desert Fox as a two-stage concentrator and final recovery unit. Whether I'm dry washing, dredging or high-banking, daily I create a great deal of concentrates that must be worked down into sellable gold without taking too much time. This is where the Mountain Goat and Desert Fox have turned days into just hours of final recovery.

After classifying to 1/4-inch and decanting all my concentrates, I will run the material through the Mountain Goat using a fairly flat angle. This means I will have much more of the black sands in the recovery trap than usual, and some of the lighter blonde material as well. After processing all my first-run concentrates, I will install an optional recovery flume that allows me to use my Desert Fox for final recovery. The flume sets on the unit in place of the recovery trap and directs the final concentrates directly into my spiral wheel, which in turn removes the final waste material and deposits clean ready to dry and sell gold into the catch cup.

On the second or final run after changing my water, adding surfactant, installing the flume and setting the angle steeper on the Mountain Goat, I will place my Desert Fox into the proper spot in front of the flume to allow the final concentrates to drop just in front of the pickup leads on the wheel.

With the two pieces of equipment in place, I will run a small amount as a test to assure proper angles on both the Mountain Goat and the Desert Fox. Once I know that my recovery is as expected, I'll sit down in my comfy garage chair and begin feeding the Mountain Goat, watching as the gold and a very small amount of black sands drop onto the flume and into the leads of the Desert Fox. The result is clean gold dropping into the cup. That's it, that is all there is in going from a rough concentrate to a final sellable product in two very easy steps.

Even if I had never used the Mountain Goat for testing or in the field running material in dry or wet placer areas, and just used it as a two-step concentrator, the Mountain Goat has been worth every dollar I spent.

There are a few have-to-have pieces of equipment. The Camel Mining Mountain Goat is one of them, and one that I immediately saw the value in having many, many years ago, whether it's in the container ready to go to the field at any time or sitting in the shop set up to run concentrates. Coupled with the Desert Fox, this Camel Mining duo is just the right equipment for me, and I'll bet for you as well.

Pros

- Lightweight easy to carry into the field
- Intuitive design and easily adjustable for excellent first- pass recovery
- Coupled with spiral wheels for final recovery Rugged case for years of service
- Includes extra drive belts
- Price range is moderate
- Made in Arizona U.S.A.

Cons

- Drive bands can break, always have spares
- Being lightweight, some may find it challenging to set into moving water

Author's Note: Over the years, there have been a few comments concerning batteries to be used for the Mountain Goat. Most of this is clearly covered in the trouble-shooting guide section of the instructions. However, I do want to re-iterate the need for always using a battery over using a charger without a battery in line. If you use a charger that will work without a battery in the system, there is a high possibility that the charger is running a higher voltage to your unit which will cause the unit to run faster and out of the normal specs for optimal gold recovery. Every part of the Mountain Goat Trommel was designed to work together with each component. Altering any part of the unit, be it water flow or power, will influence your final recovery.

Kevin Hoagland is the host of the GPAA-produced TV series Gold Trails and the Executive Director of Development for the Lost Dutchman's Mining Association. He can be reached at khoagland@goldprospectors.org.

GPAA

Colorado Springs Chapter Links

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<https://gpoc.club>

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(between Buena Vista & Salida, 5 miles south of Nathrop)

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