

AUTHOR WORKS TO RESTORE HISTORIC NAME TO LOCAL PEAK



The view of the former Bridal Peak from Mount Sneffels. Courtesy photo.



Author Jeff Burch places a summit register atop Unnamed 13,510, which he hopes to restore to its former name of Bridal Peak. Courtesy photo.

By Caitlin Switzer

REGIONAL—It's a lesson in the nature of mountains, and of man. A name chosen for a peak centuries ago was lost to time, though the peak itself remains at the head of Bridal Veil Basin above Telluride. Author Jeff Burch discovered the situation while researching his latest work, *The Peaks of Telluride*. Burch, who lives in Delta, has built a business over the years called ColoradoThirteeners.com, which produces and markets labeled images of Colorado's mountains. When he learned of the existence of the unnamed thirteener known today as unnamed 13,510, or T11, Burch also learned that it had once been Colorado's only "Bridal Peak."

Located on the Eastern rim of Bridal Veil Basin, the peak is important to the history of the region, notes Burch, who has taken his cause before local government representatives in search of support.

On his web site, www.bridalpeak.com, Burch talks about how he first learned of the peak's lost heritage.

"...(Longtime Telluride resident) Billy Mahoney, Sr. was a great source of all

kinds of information," writes Burch. "And in our discussions he pointed out the Unnamed (13,510) peak at the head of Bridal Veil Basin... and showed it to us in a 1962 U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin clearly labeled as Bridal Peak. On modern day U.S. Geological Survey maps, and in the official record system for names of geographic places, Bridal Peak has been lost. It does not appear anywhere."

While Burch said he can see reasons why the names of some other peaks have since been abandoned, in this instance, he believes it was a mistake.

"I just don't want it to be lost to history," Burch said. "It is an important name associated with the history of Telluride and times gone by. I would like to see it perpetuated."

Besides, there is an element of romance to the name, he noted.

"This peak is unique because it is not easy to see," Burch said. "It is only visible from one short segment of the Tomboy Road. You've gotta hike to get there, but once you're on top it is a gorgeous sum-

mit—I have been on it three times this year.

"I have placed a summit register in a PVC can up there," said Burch, who has also taken his quest for support to the towns of Telluride and Mountain Village as well as the San Miguel County and San Juan county boards of commissioners, all of whom have expressed their support for the project. "And I have circulated a note to people to support renaming Bridal Peak.

"Every local representative is in favor," Burch said. "This feels like a winner."

Burch said that he expects the renaming process to take about six months. Letters of support from local officials will be sent to the State Board of Geographic names, he said.

"I am waiting to get the letters, and then we will make a request to the board," he said. "The board may take it up at their next quarterly meeting.

"I am not making this into a lifetime campaign," he added. "But the community support we are seeing may be just enough."

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