

EAGLE POST 41

We are in the process of CHANGING OUR NAME from **Friends of Eagles Nest Wilderness** to **EAGLE SUMMIT WILDERNESS ALLIANCE - ESWA**, but we will still be apprising you of important activities in and around Eagles Nest, Holy Cross, and Ptarmigan Peak Wilderness Areas.

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October 2019

Dear *|FNAME|*

Greetings! Our topic this month is
NATURE AS HEALER

By Susie Kincade

Environmental Activist, Nature-based coach, and
Founder, [Women's Empowerment Workshop](#)



INTRODUCTION: "Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth will find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts" (Rachel Carson). "In wildness is the preservation of the world" (H.D. Thoreau). These and myriad other eloquent statements by the founders of the wilderness movement and subsequent enthusiasts have for a century fueled enthusiasm to preserve and protect public lands in general and Wildernesses in particular (read 34 excerpts [HERE](#)). While the truths of these statements seem self-evident to many - perhaps most - of us, they are nevertheless anecdotal opinions of individuals, lacking evidenced-based support. But lately, scientists have been testing those hypotheses, with quantitative results that are robustly supportive, confirming that contact with wild nature provides diverse, measurable, salutary effects on one's health, adding powerful confirmation to the affirmations of Murrie, Muir, Zanhiser, Carson, Thoreau, Leopold, Abbey, and many more.

Below, life coach and environmental activist Susie Kincade describes some of these new results and activities, including "Forest Bathing". In her personal and

professional life, Susie's blend of spirituality and pragmatism has created an effective and extensively tested guide for mining the unlimited resources for personal growth that await one in wilderness.

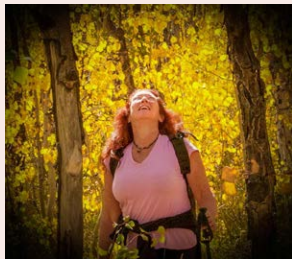
Nature as Healer

By Susie Kincade

Environmental Activist,
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As stewards of our beloved mountain environment, we have experienced the evidence we need to believe that nature is a powerful healer. We know wild nature feeds our body, mind and spirit. Nature's magic melts away the creases on our face; our breathing slows and deepens, shoulders let go, anger/frustration/anxiety dissipate, and a sense of calm softens our energy. This is Nature as medicine. And the science is pouring in to support this.



Forest Bathing or Shinrin-yoku, developed in Japan during the 1980s, means "taking in the forest atmosphere" and is a cornerstone of preventive health care and healing in Japanese medicine. Many employers require their workers to take time in the forest areas set aside in cities. Documented effects include boosting the immune system; reduced blood pressure, stress and anxiety; improved mood and ability to focus; increased energy and sense of well-being.

What is happening 'out there' in nature is also happening inside our brain. There is a frequency to the natural world and it is curious that our brains tend to resonate at similar frequencies. Consider that in our awake, busy, multi-tasking state, our brains run in the Beta electrical frequency which is about 12 – 24 cycles per second (Hz). When we meditate, our brain waves relax to the slower Alpha state, 7-12 Hz. This is similar to the measured electromagnetic frequency of the earth's resonance, which is about 7.84 Hz. While no scientific measurements have directly linked the earth's resonance to brain waves, it is soothing to know that when we go into the forest our brain naturally slows down to earth's natural resonance, bathing us in gentle electromagnetic waves.



Thus, a walk in the woods or sitting in verdant gardens can relax and rejuvenate the brain, much like meditation. Add a water feature into the landscape and you just upped your nature dosage. Moving water like the ocean or waterfalls produce the uplifting effect of negative ions that trigger serotonin releases in the brain which, in

turn, counteracts stress, anxiety and depression.



In the book, [Your Brain on Nature](#), Dr. Eva Shelub and naturopath Alan C. Logan cite a hospital study showing that more aesthetically pleasing nature views fire up a specific portion of the brain rich in opioid receptors. These opioid receptors trigger feelings of wellness and can enhance healing significantly. In a sense, nature is like a little drop of natural, non-addictive morphine for the brain.

[David Strayer](#), a cognitive psychologist at the University of Utah, has done studies that reveal the “3 day effect”. Nature immersion significantly revives the brain and cognitive ability, as in one study where subjects performed 50% better cognitively after three days backpacking.

In his book, [Last Child in the Woods](#), Richard Louv postulates that “nature deficit disorder” as a key factor in the rise of childhood problems like attention deficit, obesity and possibly even diabetes. When children don’t play regularly and freely in nature they miss out on developing critical skills like spatial awareness and mapping; three-dimensional problem solving, as in building forts, and crossing creeks; and developing a sense of wonder about and connection to the natural world.



All science aside, nature’s overall healing is a powerful felt sense, one that John Muir eloquently described more than a century ago: “Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature’s peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop away from you like the leaves of Autumn.”

For Muir and many of us, Nature is our most powerful medicine. While the science behind that is exciting to know, the simple nature RX is to put ourselves in a place where nature’s peace can flow into us.

Learn more about the growing body of healing through nature from the book, [“The Nature Fix”](#) by Florence Williams

ABOUT SUSIE KINCADE

Since she can remember, Susie has been an advocate for our earth and especially for water and wilderness. Raising her daughters on a small ranch



in Eagle, she experienced their empowerment from living close to nature. She founded Women's Empowerment Workshop to help women, girls and families discover their power, confidence and deep connection to nature and Self through retreats, workshops and life coaching.



Susie has worked for [Wilderness Workshop](#) for the past 11 years as a grassroots organizer for new wilderness in Eagle and Summit Counties. The current iteration of this campaign is the Colorado Outdoor Recreation & Economy (CORE) Act, now making its way through the U.S. House and Senate. She balances her industrious work life by hiking, rafting wild rivers, growing a voluminous organic garden and cultivating fantastic adventures in the garden of life. Learn more at www.womenempower.us. Contact Susie directly: 970.328.5472. susie@womenempower.us.



<http://www.womenempower.us/>

A huge thanks to [ARAPAHOE BASIN SKI AREA](#). For more than two decades, A-Basin staff have donated generously to their **Employee Environmental Fund**, of which FENW has been a steady beneficiary. Last year, more than 150 employees donated, led by A-Basin Director **Alan Henceroth**. Our enduring THANKS!



Our Business Sponsor SPOTLIGHT is on  ELITE THERAPEUTICS  one of our major business supporters. Developed by an oncologist for post-radiation skin therapy, [Elite](#) products provide soothing anti-aging benefits that are of special use in our intense, high altitude sunshine. Supplier to  Support ELITE - support FENW.

So many to **THANK**, so little space... Our deep thanks to:

Avalanche Ranch: Chuck Ogilby and daughter Molly Jacober of [Avalanche Ranch](#) have generously donated for 5 years **Jay's Hut** at Shrine Mountain Inn for our Volunteer Wilderness Ranger end-of-season party. The gathering is a highlight every year for our volunteer rangers.

Restop, the leader in personal sanitation and hygiene in the backcountry (as well as many other venues), for donations of wag bags, which we offer to backpackers headed to the deep backcountry.

Abbey's Coffee for their generous and frequent caffeine catalysts to get our volunteers off on an early start

Whole Foods Frisco provided delicious pastries to go with the coffee for the work crew on Lily Pad Trail.

Donors to the WilderFest Silent Auction: **Target** (gift card), **REI Dillon** (daypack), **Kim Fenske** (2 hiking guidebooks), **Elite Therapeutics** (basket of skincare products), **Epic Mountain EXPRESS** (round trip coupon), **Maryann Gaug** (hiking guidebook), **Baker's Brewery** (gift card & free beer), **Red Buffalo Cafe** (hat, mug, coffee), and **The Clubhouse** (one hour on golf simulator).

OUR SINCERE THANKS TO YOU ALL FOR HELPING TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE CROWN JEWEL OF PUBLIC LANDS - WILDERNESS!

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... make a difference!

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The Summer 2019 hard copy newsletter was mailed in mid-May. It contains two dozen fun and informative articles, all of them about FENW - past, present, and future. If you didn't receive a copy, then we

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Join us! Next **Planning Meeting**
THURSDAY OCTOBER 10, 5:30 PM,
USFS offices in Minturn & Silverthorne
(video link)
Details at www.fenw.org/

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