

## EAGLE POST 48

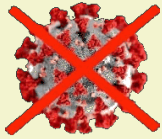
The newsletter of **ESWA - EAGLE SUMMIT WILDERNESS ALLIANCE** apprises you of important activities in and around Eagles Nest, Holy Cross, and Ptarmigan Peak Wilderness Areas.

[EagleSummitWilderness.org](http://EagleSummitWilderness.org)

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**BEFORE WE BEGIN...** Naturally, we will not be holding VWR Training Day on June 6 as originally scheduled, but we are hoping that it can take place later in the summer, perhaps August (fingers crossed). Starting Memorial Day, after completion of required re-certification, returning VWRs will be out on patrol (with suitable COVID-19-related precautions). New recruits will have opportunities to accompany VWRs as "apprentices" and will also have digital copies of the newly-revised Training Manual. You can apply [HERE](#).



**MARK YOUR CALENDAR** We are hopeful that our four overnight work trips with llamas will occur as originally scheduled. We will continually assess the circumstances.

**July 17-19** -- Upper Cataract Lake trip (with llamas).

**July 31-Aug 2** – Lake Constantine trip (with llamas).

**August 14-16:** Missouri Lakes trip (with llamas)

**August 28-30** – Slate Lakes trip (with llamas)

Have questions or need for information? Send us an [email](#)

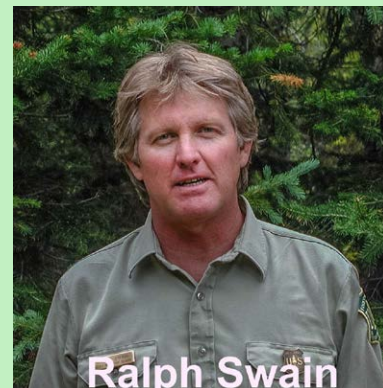


May 2020

Dear \*|FNAME|\*

Greetings! Our topic this month:  
**Pandemic and Wilderness - a centennial**

**By Ralph Swain**



## INTRODUCTION

We mark these trying times with a remarkable double centennial - that of the "Spanish Flu" pandemic and the near-simultaneous birth of the Wilderness movement in the US. **Arthur Carhart** (1892-1978) was intimately involved with both events, as told below by **Ralph Swain**. Ralph, a devoted student of wilderness history, is USFS Manager of 47 Wilderness areas in five states, including Colorado, which of course comprises those areas - Holy Cross, Ptarmigan Peak, and Eagles Nest - that ESWA helps look after.

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## The 1918 Flu Epidemic and Arthur Carhart

BY RALPH SWAIN

At times like these when all of us are contemplating what the new normal might look like, it can be instructive to look back in history to see what we can learn from the past. The 1918 flu epidemic offers some insightful connections to wilderness and one of our first wilderness champions, Arthur Carhart.

**Spanish Flu, 1918. Family Portrait, including cat**



Many incorrectly referred to the 1918 flu as the Spanish flu because Spain's government was one of the first to announce the spread of the devastating virus. The first American infections occurred in American soldiers fighting in the trenches in World War I in Europe. Many soldiers died after the flu spread rapidly through close quarters. In total, approximately 50 million people died from the 1918 flu epidemic worldwide, of which 675,000 died in the United States (Abbott et. al., 2006).

Arthur Carhart graduated from Iowa State College in 1916 as a Landscape Architect and entered the Army in September 1917. The Army did not send Carhart to war in Europe, but instead stationed him at Camp Meade near Washington DC to oversee the health and sanitation of the military training camp where the spread of the flu and diseases were a major concern. He served as a First Lieutenant in the Sanitary Corps. Carhart actually came down with the deadly influenza in the fall of 1918, but his newlywed wife, Vee, nursed him "instead of having to tough it out in the camp hospital" (Wolf, 2008).

Following his recovery, the Forest Service hired Carhart as the first Recreation Engineer (dubbed beauty engineer) in District 2 (called Region 2 today) in March 1919. One of Carhart's first assignments was to travel to [Trappers Lake](#) in the summer of 1919 to draw up plans

for several hundred home sites and a road around the lake. The summer homes were to be leased by the Forest Service to private citizens under the new 1915 Term Permit Act. Upon his return to the Denver Office, Carhart recommended to his supervisor, Carl J. Stahl, that (1) no homes or road be built, or if leases had to be allowed, (2) the home sites would be set back from the lake and screened by the forest trees. He strongly felt that,

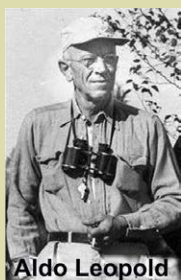
“...these areas can never be restored to the original condition after man has invaded them, and the greatest value lying as it does in natural scenic beauty.... Time will come when these scenic spots, where nature has been allowed to remain unmarred, will be some of the most highly prized scenic features of the country” (Baldwin, 1972).



**Arthur Carhart**  
Saganaga Lake, MN, June 1921, now the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness



## Trappers Lake



**Aldo Leopold**

On December 6, 1919, the Denver Office held a meeting with another wilderness champion, **Aldo Leopold**, the Assistant District Forester who was urging his bosses in District 3 (Region 3) to set aside the [Gila Wilderness](#) for preservation in its natural condition before roads and development ruined the wild country. From that meeting and the visionary thinking of champions like Carhart and Leopold, the wilderness concept was born. (Click [HERE](#) to read Carhart's summary of the meeting.)

However, Carhart's vision of providing public land access to the returning soldiers and the American people did not end at Trappers Lake. Later, in 1919 and early 1920, Carhart drew up plans for development of the first "health" camp (as he liked to call them) at Squirrel Creek on the San Isabel National Forest west of Pueblo. His health camps would



provide auto camp conveniences – the forerunner to today's Forest Service campgrounds.

The flu, which started on the East Coast in America, spread to Colorado by late September during the deadlier second wave of the virus where it sickened a dozen soldiers-trainees at a military training camp in Boulder and quickly spread to Denver, Colorado Springs and Pueblo. In total, the flu killed approximately 8,000 people in Colorado from September 1918 to late January 1919. Reports of flu deaths continued until December 1920.

Today, as we contemplate our future and the benefits we derive from wilderness, we can thank wilderness leaders like Arthur Carhart and Aldo Leopold. They inspire us to take pleasure in things remaining “normal” like hearing birds chirping and the sounds of nature, seeing wildlife roaming free in wild places without roads and development and gazing in awe at beautiful sunsets that remind us of why we care so much for wilderness.

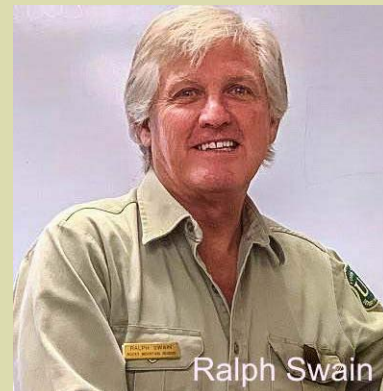
#### REFERENCES:

- \* Abbott, Carl, Leonard, Stephen J., Noel, Thomas J., Colorado: A History of the Centennial State, Fourth Edition, 2005
- \* Baldwin, Donald N., The Quiet Revolution: Grass Roots of Today's Wilderness Preservation Movement, Pruett Publishing Company, 1972
- \* Wolf, Tom, Arthur Carhart: Wilderness Prophet, University Press of Colorado, 2008

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### ABOUT RALPH SWAIN

Ralph Swain is the Forest Service Rocky Mountain Region (Region 2) Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers Program Manager in Lakewood, Colorado. He started his FS career as a firefighter on a hot shot crew in California and has worked in wilderness as a trail crew foreman, wilderness ranger, and District and Forest Wilderness Manager in California, Montana and Colorado. Ralph has also worked with protected area managers on international assignments in Belize, Mexico, South Africa, Russia, Romania and the country of Georgia.

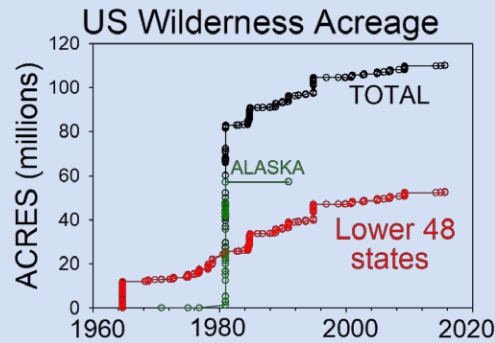


### POSTSCRIPT - SINCE THEN:

The descendents of both the pandemic and the Wilderness movement are still very much with us, shifting, drifting, evolving. The 1918 virus - "the mother of all influenza pandemics" - didn't disappear entirely after the 1918 pandemic faded, but morphed again and again, persisting in pigs, birds, and humans, undergoing both gradual and abrupt mutagenic changes, causing annual epidemics. Fortunately, its virulence declined over time, but despite knowing the full sequence of the 1918 viral genome, we still cannot identify precisely the molecular determinants of its terrible toll. Curiously, the 1918

pandemic spared the old (they accounted for less than 1% of deaths), perhaps because they had been exposed to a viral precursor in their youth.

NOTE: Today's novel coronavirus is a newbie, not related genetically to the influenza virus.



Like the virus, the wilderness movement evolved over the ensuing century. By the mid-1930s the efforts of Carhart and many others led to the creation of The Wilderness Society, and thirty years later the movement reached its apotheosis with the passage of the 1964 Wilderness Act, and the protection of millions of acres of Wilderness soon followed.



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 ESWA has been a steady beneficiary. Last year, more than 150 employees donated, led by A-Basin Director **Alan Henceroth**. Our enduring THANKS!

Make a donation to ESWA...



... make a difference!

Check out other [recent monthly eNewsletters](#)



The Spring-Summer 2020 hard copy newsletter is in production.

We'll mail out copies in early May - it will be chock full of information about our 2020 season. If you didn't receive by mail last November's issue, then *we don't have your*

Follow us



**Join us! Next Planning Meeting Thursday, MAY 14** at 5:30 PM, The meeting will probably be held virtually, via Zoom. Join us via internet with one click: <https://ucdenver.zoom.us/j/4732124622>

Full logon information (e.g., phone-in) is at [zoom\\_join\\_meeting.pdf](#)

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