

## Fall is golden in the wilderness!



### **ONLY TWO DAYS LEFT TO SAVE LAST LOCAL HERD OF NATIVE BIGHORNS!**

Just over Vail Pass in Eagle County, [ESWA](#), the Town of Vail, and a [group of concerned citizens](#) are trying to preserve the last remaining winter habitat for a native herd of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep. The S2 Gore Range Bighorn herd has over-wintered on the land, locally known as Booth Heights, for millennia. But now the last of their winter habitat is threatened by development. Learn more [here](#).

The Town of Vail must decide at their October 3 meeting whether to pay the \$17.5 million condemnation price, plus associated costs and fees in the \$3 million range. Eagle County may contribute, but both the County and Town say they need to receive confirmation of widespread public support for the purchase.

Please take a moment today to let [Council](#) and [County Commissioners](#) know that you support the purchase. And even a small [donation](#) to the purchase price will help (be sure to direct your [donation](#) to the “Vail Bighorn Sheep Initiative”).



Photo courtesy of Richard Seeley

**ESWA CELEBRATES SUCCESSFUL 2023 SEASON. THANKS TO ALL VOLUNTEERS AND PARTNERS!**

Framed by sun-soaked golden aspens at the Eagles Nest Community Center, about 50 ESWA volunteers and supporters celebrated a productive season of supporting Wilderness. Guests included Julie McCluskie, Speaker of the House, Colorado State Representative, District 6; and Dylan Roberts, Colorado State Senator, District 8; and USFS colleagues Kat Bazan, Cindy Ebbert, Tyler Kirkpatrick, and Mark Steinbrecher.



State Senator Dylan Roberts and Speaker of the House Rep. Julie McCluskie provide closing remarks on Wilderness.

**Highlights included:**

Fun prizes, including two \$50 gift certificates and cool tumblers donated by Alpine Bank

Remembrances of our late VWR/Sawyer Ken Harper and Wilderness photographer and ESWA friend John Fielder

**Awards included:**

VWR of the Year: Frances Hartogh

Rookie VWR of the Year: Julie Chichlowski

Trailhead Hosts of the Year: Joan Betz and Joan Hutchinson

Ken Harper Memorial Sawyer of the Year: Markus Klauser

Two Currie Craven Awards for Wilderness Stewardship: Maryann Gaug and George Resseguie (details soon to come on ESWA's website).



Joan Betz presents George Resseguie Currie Craven Award - Maryann Gaug accepts Currie Craven Award

Winners of the John Fielder Wilderness Photo Contest (chosen from 30 submitted photos taken in our 4 Wilderness Areas):

First place: Ellen Miller;

Runners-up: Stan Wagon, Guy Warren, Ellen Miller (all photos soon available on ESWA website; boxes of notecards available next month).



Ellen Miller's winning photo: Tuhare Lakes

## HELP SET NEXT YEAR'S PRIORITIES FOR WILDERNESS WORK

Every year ESWA works with the Forest Service to determine what projects we will work on next year. We certainly don't want to put unnecessary improvements in our Wilderness Areas, which after all are supposed to be *untrammled*! On the other hand, carefully planned projects can both preserve the wilderness and make visits safer and even more pleasant. When we improve trails and bridges and cut back vegetation on the trails, we help keep hikers on the trail, protecting the vegetation and preventing erosion. We also restore illegal campfire rings near lakes, hopefully discouraging more fires, which are highly damaging to our fragile alpine environment.

Next year, in addition to our yearly Volunteer Wilderness Ranger hikes, Trailhead Hosting, and Sawyer tree-clearing programs, ESWA is looking at numerous projects. These include restoring the old Surprise Lake trail, helping with the Buffalo-Willow Creek reroute, and (if hoped-for grants are provided) rebuilding Summit County's Meadow Creek Trail. And, thanks to a generous grant from Maryann Gaug, we will replace the South Willow Creek bridge. And of course, we will continue our Deluge Lake maintenance and trek with llamas on our four (perhaps even five) weekend trips to work deeper in the wilderness.

**What repairs, maintenance, or restoration do you think need to be done?** Are there ignored areas that need some TLC? Where should we take our weekend llama trips? ESWA is considering a multi-year program "Wilderness Gateways" to restore and repair the overused trails to the wilderness along I-70. Which trails would you nominate? Can you join us and help organize projects – Let us know!

This January we will launch the Wilderness Gateways project, look for the announcement. Contact [Jim Alexander](#) and [Dave Brewster](#).

## WILD & SCENIC FILM FESTIVAL - SAVE THE DATE MARCH 2, 2024!

Join us at the Riverwalk Center in Breck when ESWA and A-Basin host their second annual Wild &

Scenic Film Festival. This is a spectacular event and a major fundraiser for Wilderness. Here's a [link](#) to this year's trailer.



### **PLEASE JOIN/RENEW YOUR ESWA MEMBERSHIP BEFORE YEAR-END**

ESWA is a membership-based organization, and because we are an all-volunteer organization, 100% of your contribution goes directly to support our programs.

Donations received starting October 1 are credited to your 2024 annual membership. Visit the [Join/Donate page](#) on ESWA's website. You can also mail a check to ESWA at P.O. Box 4504, Frisco, Co 80443-4504. Choose from several membership levels, each with its own reward (in addition to helping protect Wilderness). Please be as generous as you can. Help ESWA "Keep Wilderness Wild!"

### **HELP ESWA GET \$\$\$\$\$ FOR FREE!!**

There is an easy way for you to give money to ESWA at no cost to you. City Market and King Soopers offers this opportunity. They will donate a percentage of every dollar you spend at their stores when you use your normal Loyalty Club Card. Here is all you need to do:

Go to the Community Rewards page on the King Sooper's website: <https://www.kingsoopers.com/i/community/community-rewards>.

Click "Enroll Now."

If you already have an online account, sign in using your email and password and skip to step 6.

If you don't have an account, click "Create Account" at the bottom of the page.

Enter the requested information and click "Create Account."

Under "Find an Organization" search for Eagle Summit Wilderness Alliance.

Click Enroll.

***THAT'S IT. NOW EVERY TIME SHOP YOU GIVE BACK TO WILDERNESS. THANK YOU.***