



**A MESSAGE FROM ESWA CHAIR MIKE BROWNING**

Spring never felt so good! As we emerge from the last 12 months, we look forward to getting outside, spending time with our friends, and enjoying our favorite Wilderness trails. ESWA offers lots of ways this summer for you to do all three – and give back to Wilderness at the same time.

Our signature program – Volunteer Wilderness Rangers – will kick off the summer with our annual Training Day on Saturday, June 5. If you are not already a VWR, consider taking the training. It’s a fun way to learn more about our Wilderness Areas, Leave No Trace principles, Wilderness regulations, and the Authority of the Resource. Don’t know what that is? Then you need to take the training. Sign up on our website.

This summer we will officially kick off our new Trailhead Host Program. You can serve as a host at a trailhead to help educate the public about our Wilderness before they head up the trail. Sign up for hosting days on our website and see the article on Trailhead Hosting on page 7. Help us make the new program a success.

On June 11-13 we will offer Sawyer training for those who want to help clear the seemingly endless number of trees that fall across our trails each year. Doing so is fun, great exercise, and very rewarding. See the article on our Sawyer Program on page 5.

Our very own Weed Master, Jim Alexander, and his crew of WeedSpotters will continue their attack on invasive weeds, which are a threat to native vegetation and wildlife. See Jim’s article on page 4 for weed events happening this summer. Get your gloves on!

Want to hike with a llama? Sign-up for one of our llama-supported overnight work trips. We will have trips this summer to Surprise Lake, Lake Constantine, and Sopris/Brady. See the article on page 4 for details.

Don’t like to sleep on the ground? Our single-day work projects, where we clear water-bars, trim vegetation, and do other light trail-maintenance work, are for you. Check the Calendar on the Home Page of our new website to see when these will be scheduled throughout the summer.

ESWA continues its advocacy efforts this year, including opposing the proposed Homestake III project and the Berlaimont development, and supporting passage of the CORE Act. We already helped defeat the proposed Lower Blue gravel pit! See the article on page 3. Your membership in ESWA helps us fund these efforts and increase our voice.

Finally, I am thrilled that we added three new members of our Board in March – Karn Stiegelmeier, Steve Elder and Tom Copper. Read more about them on pages 2, 5, and 6. Tom has already agreed to take over as Treasurer, replacing Chris Turner who has served long and ably. Thanks to both Tom and Chris. And thanks to our new Webmaster, Cindy Levin, and Database Manager, Merry Lynne Hamilton.

Let’s make this a great summer. Lace up your boots and help us Keep Wilderness Wild!

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**ESWA Online**



## Karn Stiegelmeier - New Board Member

I grew up in Colorado skiing and camping, graduated from CU, Boulder with a brand new degree, with only 8 of us in that initial year of graduates in Environmental Conservation. I was involved with the Wilderness Club at CU way back then. I left Colorado in 1976. I thought it had been ruined by John Denver's songs creating awareness of Colorado's glories, and too many people moving here. I worked in Mt. Hood National Forest in Oregon as a firefighter, then Naturalist, then Wilderness Ranger, then in California teaching environmental education with Yosemite Institute. I taught science and outdoor education at two Bay Area schools, and worked summers as a ranger/naturalist for Crater Lake National Park, Everglades National Park and Grand Teton National Park.



## US Forest Service Reports

From USFS Liaisons to ESWA. Cindy and Katherine are Wilderness & Trails Managers in 2 adjacent Ranger Districts (RDs)



### Katherine Bazan, Eagle-Holy Cross RD

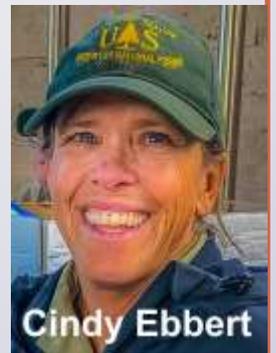
We are excited to start the summer season in the Holy Cross, Eagles Nest and Flat Tops Wildernesses. This year a big focus of ours is implementing projects funded by the **Great**



**American Outdoors Act.** While none of these projects is occurring within Wilderness (this year!) they are still important to highlight. We will be rerouting a section of the Game Creek Trail and a section of the Colorado Trail with these funds. Our Wilderness crew this season will comprise returning Lead Wilderness Ranger **Mark Steinbrecher**, another returning ranger, **Adam Willett**, along with support from our 3-person trail crew. Our 2 **llamas** will be back this year to support ESWA volunteer work projects, other trail maintenance projects and to help remove trash stashes located in the Wilderness. In addition to our usual patrol work, making visitor contacts, clearing trails, and doing campsite restoration work, we have a couple of larger priority projects planned. These include clearing the 2019 avalanche slide path on Cross Creek trail, alpine restoration work on the Booth Lake Trail, and camp site inventory work in the Holy Cross and Flat Tops Wildernesses. We hope to keep a strong presence at our high use areas and continue spreading messaging about Leave No Trace and Wilderness ethics as we continue to see more visitors in our wild and beautiful places.

### Cindy Ebbert, Dillon RD

We are very excited for summer to start and our crews to arrive! The two Wilderness Rangers are **Megan Sullivan** is returning from last year and **Rocio Ronquillo** who will be an intern joining us from Texas. We will also have a 6-person Trail Crew to do trail maintenance projects and clear the wilderness trails using crosscut saws. Rounding out the group will be a Rocky Mountain Youth Corps crew who will put the final touches on the Mesa Cortina Boardwalk before we hold the dedication



ceremony in memory of Beau Schuette. The Surprise Trail realignment is moving forward with ESWA funding. Contour Logic, a company based in Boulder will be retained to prepare the design for the realignment of a particularly steep section, and the environmental analysis for the reconstruction will be completed this fall. We anticipate the project will occur in 2022! The Maryland Creek Trail that connects the Summit Sky Ranch housing development to the Gore Range Trail will be finished this summer! We have a volunteer day tentatively schedule for August 21<sup>st</sup> along with a ribbon cutting of the new trail. We look forward to another beautiful summer in Summit County!

## Finances

With a record number of hikers in 2020, we are pleased to see more volunteers and donations (nearly \$20,000) giving us the ability to help the Forest Service with more projects. Jim Alexander secured several more grants which will allow us to continue the battle of invasive weeds in several areas around Summit County.

In 2021 ESWA deposited \$2,150 in our Endowment Fund, which had annual growth of 9%, bringing the current value to just over \$63,000. If you want to leave to ESWA a lasting legacy, consider a gift to the Endowment Fund, the earnings of which will provide support for ESWA for many years to come. Learn more on the website (scan this QR code).



## ESWA Advocacy Update

**NEWS FLASH! Quarry Story #1:** The pastoral **Lower Blue River Valley** is saved from a catastrophe - an open pit **gravel quarry**. A brilliant team led by JOHN FIELDER and Lower Blue Residents United (LBRU) provided compelling evidence, and on April 29 the state Reclamation & Mining Board **UNANIMOUSLY DENIED** the permit. **CONGRATULATIONS!**



ESWA works to promote 5 additional campaigns that benefit our local Wilderness Areas. Read background and details on the ESWA website.

1. **Passage of the CORE Act** will protect 400,000 acres of public lands in Colorado, including 3 new Wilderness Areas in Summit County and the first-ever National Historic Landscape around Camp Hale. CORE has passed the House and is awaiting consideration in the Senate.



2. Opposition to **Homestake III**, aka the Whitney Reservoir. ESWA is working to stop Front Range cities from constructing a dam and reservoir in the Holy Cross Wilderness. The USFS recently approved seismic test drilling to determine a possible location of the reservoir.



3. **Rename the Gore Range to the Nuchu Range.** George Gore was entirely unworthy of such a spectacular namesake, while the Ute Indians had been worthy stewards of the land for millenia. Nuchu means “Ute” in their language. The issue is now before the Colorado Geographic Naming Advisory Board.



4. **Buck Berlaimont.** ESWA is opposing efforts to construct trophy homes on a 680-acre parcel completely surrounded by the White River National Forest. Although the USFS approved an access road through the forest last September, ESWA has provided testimony urging the Eagle County commissioners to oppose the project.



5. **Protect East Vail's Bighorn Sheep:** ESWA is opposing Vail Resorts' proposal to construct employee housing on bighorn sheep winter habitat above the East Vail exit near the boundary with the Eagles Nest Wilderness.



## Quarry Story #2

Dotsero also turned down a proposal for a **Gravel Quarry**. In a Summit Daily article, the testimony of ESWA Chair **MIKE BROWNING** was quoted in detail. It likely had a significant impact on the final vote by the Commissioners. Mike and John Fielder deserve the **QUARRY GLORY** Award for 2021. Thank you both!

## Quarry Story #3

On April Fools Day, 2017, we published this in our newsletter, by the journalist April Phule. “Work on the new **gravel pits** slated for the Lower Blue River Valley will begin in the summer of 2017 at Slate Creek. However, the quarries will have a relatively short lifetime, says Chief Engineer Sunit Skye [Summit Sky]. ‘We are partnering with Summit County Landfill,’ explained Skye, ‘who will be moving their operation down the Blue, and we’ll have those gravel pits filled before too long.’ Sunit will be seeking assistance from volunteers to move the mined gravels. ‘If we can add 414 feet to the top of Mt. Powell, then Eagles Nest will have its first fourteener. That should attract thousands of new hikers,’ he enthused.”

## Making News

ESWA is now authoring regular **newspaper columns** in both the Summit Daily and the Vail Daily on matters of interest to lovers of Wilderness.

Summit Daily: New board member Karn Stiegelmeier is hosting a **weekly column** called **Get Wild!** every Friday.

In addition, ESWA Secretary Frances Hartogh is co-authoring with Walking Mountains Science Center a **monthly column** in the VAIL DAILY on Hikes and Nature.

The inaugural issues have just appeared, and you can access them through the ESWA website (scan this QR code).



## Natives or Invaders?

For the third year in a row, ESWA has been awarded a grant to fight invasive weeds in our three Wilderness Areas. Last year we saw a remarkable reduction in weeds at Harrigan Creek, Martin Creek and other areas treated. We hope to see even more progress this year!

The WeedSpotters will continue to search for new infestations and measure the progress against known infestations. We're beginning with training the morning of **June 19** in Minturn. If you want to learn to identify weeds, join the fun! Last year we found a dozen or so noxious weed species.

We will also conduct weed pulls on **July 10** and **July 31**. Join us to help clear a field of musk thistle and plumeless thistle. By the afternoon, you'll be an expert at identifying those two invaders. And you might make some new friends.

We're also beginning to look at the *native* plants in our area (especially in the Alpine region). As part of this effort, we're scheduling seed collection days late summer and early fall. We're also working with Betty Ford Alpine Gardens to begin a citizen science program to collect data on native plants.

Contact Jim Alexander at [weeds@eaglesummitwilderness.org](mailto:weeds@eaglesummitwilderness.org) for more information and to get on the list.



WeedSpotter Training Day

## 2021 Trail & Campsite Work Projects

ESWA helps maintain Wilderness trails and eliminate illegal campsites and fire rings at backcountry lakes. In Eagle county, we partner with the Adopt-A-Trail program: we maintain the Deluge Lake Trail with several day projects to trim bushes, clean out water bars, and do minor trail repair. We also tackle day projects as requested by the Forest Service. In 2020 we removed several dozen illegal fire rings at Lake Constantine. We'll be announcing specific day trips for 2021 on our website and in our newsletters.

Our biggest projects take us deep into the Wilderness to remote backcountry lakes for an entire weekend. We hike in on a Friday, work Saturday (and sometimes Sunday morning), and then hike out. Our llamas, Dom and Powell, pack the tools and supplies (including libations). The llamas walk steadily, not fast, and you are welcome to walk at your own pace. We each pack in our own food and gear.

We hope you can join us on one or more of these trips. They are always memorable experiences for all.

**Eagles Nest Wilderness: Slate Lakes, July 16-18-** campfire ring decommissioning, pack out trash, trail clearing (if needed), basic drainage work.

**Holy Cross Wilderness: Lake Constantine, July 30-August 1-** Install signage ("No Fires"), obliterate illegal campfire rings, pack out trash. **Tuhare Lakes:** Assess social trails, lop willows. **Seven Sister Lakes:** decommission fire rings, monitor recreation sites.

**Holy Cross Wilderness: Sopris/Brady, August 27-29** – Install signage ("No Fires"), obliterate illegal campfire rings, rehab illegal campsite locations, improve stream crossings, reroute tread around large down tree or cut out, monitor recreation sites.

Registration is required for the llama trips. Contact Dave Brewster at [info@eaglesummitwilderness.org](mailto:info@eaglesummitwilderness.org)



## Volunteer Wilderness Ranger & TrailHead Host Training

After having to cancel VWR training in 2020 due to the pandemic, we have had a nail-biting spring as we assessed the changing regulations. We plan to provide a kind of hybrid experience - first a series of online video presentations that can be viewed at home, and then an in-person training day, which will focus on play-acting scenarios, and practicing the Authority of the Resource Technique for dealing with miscreants on the trails and at the trailheads (e.g., dog off leash, bike in Wilderness). We plan to split the nearly 50 trainees into 2 groups, and hold 2 separate in-person training sessions (morning & afternoon) on June 5. These new VWRs will provide a significant boost to our presence in the Wilderness, which comes at an fortunate time as the number of Wilderness visitors is expected to soar.



## 2021 Sawyer Program

ESWA, working with FDRD, continues to expand the successful Sawyer Program. Our crews, led by trained and certified sawyers, cleared more than 500 fallen trees from Wilderness trails in Summit and Eagle counties. Some of the trees, cut using two-person crosscut saws, were a few *feet* in diameter! Work continued through the winter on popular cross country ski trails with 85 trees cleared on the Summit county side.

Beginning in 2021 *all* members of sawyer crews will need to be certified. If you would like to take the training course (3 days), contact Mike Browning at [info@eaglesummitwilderness.org](mailto:info@eaglesummitwilderness.org). Last year, 17 trainees completed the classroom portion of certification (via zoom due to covid), and will finish on-site in-person training this summer. All training is under the experienced and expert direction of former USFS Wilderness Ranger **Anna Dal Vera**.

We need more certified sawyers, because the Forest Service would like us to adopt over a **dozen trails**. While most trees can be cleared with 19" folding saws, the big jobs require two-person crosscutters and ESWA now has 4 of them, newly sharpened and reconditioned. It is a big commitment, but certification brings many opportunities for fun, fellowship, and satisfying work. Please join us!



## Steve Elder - New Board Member

Steve grew up in New Mexico and Colorado, eventually attending the University of Utah (B.S., Journalism, 1987) and the University of Southern California (M.A., Communications Management, 1989). Since he was young, his *raison d'etre* has been to "help people realize their dreams." Perhaps that's why, while at USC, he fell into the advancement of higher education with a passion. Through his combined 25 years of work at USC, the University of Redlands, and Colorado College, he had a hand in more than \$1 billion in formal campaigns to build the capacity of institutions to support students, advance faculty, and build campuses.

Since he stepped down as vice president of advancement at Colorado College in 2011, he's been the founder and managing partner of the Colorado office of For Impact, helping non-profit organizations' *income* more closely align with their tremendous *impact*. Steve's board service includes the board of trustees of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) and the Youth Transformation Center.

A lifelong outdoor person, Steve's current passion is backcountry fly fishing with his Tenkara rod. In the winter, his favorite place to be is on cross country ski trails with Jane, his ski buddy and wife of almost 40 years. Jane and Steve have two adult daughters, Emily and Kit, both of whom are avid hikers, backpackers and skiers.

## Tom Copper - New Board Member

My wife Sharon and I spend half our year in Breckenridge, and half in Houston. I retired a few years ago and now am free to enjoy more of the great outdoors. The professional career encompassed 30 years working in the mutual fund industry, first as an analyst and eventually as a portfolio manager on a mid-cap value fund. My education consisted of a B.A. in economics and political science from Tulane University, followed by an M.B.A. from Baylor. I grew up in Artesia, New Mexico and learned to ski in Cloudcroft, Ruidoso, and Taos.

We have two grown daughters working in Houston and Seattle. In the earlier years, when it was time for family vacation, we would take the girls and escape Houston for trips to Rocky Mountain National Park, Glacier, Grand Teton, Yosemite, the various Utah parks, and of course the second-least visited National Park in the US - Big Bend National Park. Now that we have a home in Breckenridge, I can pursue my enjoyment of the outdoors in earnest. I'd like to learn more about the Wilderness Area and share the importance of the resource with others. I think working with ESWA would be an opportunity to further that objective.



## Members & Donors - THANKS!

Since June, 2020 we have received nearly \$20,000 in dues & donations from 148 supporters.

### **MOUNT POWELL (\$1000+)**

Helen Barker, Bill & Susy Gillilan, Ray Skowyra & Marianne Short

### **EAGLES NEST (\$500+)**

Michael Browning & Frances Hartogh, John Fielder, Randi & Paul Hagerman, Elliott Henry, Warren Hern, Joan Hutchinson & Stan Wagon

### **PTARMIGAN PEAK (\$250+)**

Joan & Bill Betz, Jean & Mark DeCesaris, Infinite Scope Inc, Eleanor Finlay, Jerry Kelly, Augusta Molnar, Lee Rimel, Sharon Siler, Margaret Woodhull & David Hildebrand

### **CATARACT LAKE (\$100+)**

Kurtis Barry, Emmy & Michael Betz-Hoke, Jennifer Betz & Dan Liptzin, Jay Browne, Susan Carlson, Howard & Sue Carver, Bo Chapin, Currie Craven, John Paul Devine, Jim Dickie, Sally Eggleston, Myra & Frank Eisenhart, Steve & Jane Elder, Sally Fenske, Tom & Sally Fry, Frank & Mary Gutmann, Merry Lynne Hamilton, Kenneth Heuer, Myra & Frank Isenhart, Lee & Jessica Johnson, Tom & Sally Kaesemeyer, Zachary Kauk, Susie Kincade, Susan Knopf, Jeff Leigh, Tom & Carol Oster, Mark Pearson, Adam & Anne Poe, Dave & Marilyn Raymond, George & Kathryn Resseguie, Thekla Schultz, Scott And Diane Simcox, Maryann Stein, Karn Stiegelmeier, Irv & Barbara Strauss, Robert & Sharon Swartz, Erin & Edmund Tatar, John & Pat Taylor, Don & Constance Tebbs, Becky Tomasek, Grace Wellewerts, Katherine Williams, Cindy Levin & Rick Williams, Susan Yates

### **PINEY LAKE (\$50+)**

Gilbert Barker, Charlene Beckner, Gilbert & Edith Benusa, Tom Brennom, Melanie Clary, Mark Cody, Sharon Crawford, Richard & Renée Damiano, Nicole Dellana, Marty Dick, Igor & Vera Gesse, Glenn Hackemer, Ken Harper, Mike Harrison, Dennis and Nancy Heagney, Trish Heisdorffer, Linda Hrycaj, Krista Hughes, Ann Kampf, Eric Malmberg, Sally & Barry Martin, Mike Mayrer, Allyn & Joyce Mosher, Colin O'Neill, Melinda Varn Pearson, Rick Pratt, James Pribyl, Phil & Gail Reeves, Steve & Laura Rossetter, Bev Schneiter, Marti Semmer, Beverly Simon, Katherine Sinclair, Debbie & Andy Smallwood, Marty & Maxine Solomon, Trudi Sorensen, Pamela Stenmark, Duane Stewart, David & Sandy Street, Linda Tatem, Megan & James Testin, Diane Wagener & Brent Snow, Melissa Wills

### **LILY PAD (\$25+)**

Dan Austin, Mike Beach, Drs. Susan Bonfield & David Schimel, Kathy Chandler-Henry, Liand Clasen, Yonah Cohen, Michael Connolly, Shawn Countess, Matthew Coye, Patricia & Ross Dixon, Tim Drescher, Larry Edmondson, Jennifer Faoro Weller, Janet Marie & Paul Frederickson, Maryann Gaug, Leigh Girvin, Suzanne Greene, Sara Hall, Kristin & John Howland, Robert Klumpp, Paula Konigsberg, Sally Liu, Tamara McClelland, Anne McKibbin, Walter Moore, Kay Norby Fial, Michael North, Peter & Susana Novembre, David Owens, Roger Paluska, Ann Marie Pierce, Bob Reinert, Joe Schmidt, Julie Shapiro & Sam Massman, Tricia Smith

## TrailHead Hosting - a rewarding experience



Labor Day weekend 2020 arrived with blue skies and mild temperatures - a welcome respite from recent smoky skies and a stark difference from the three inches of snow we had just two days later!

On Sunday, September 6th, of that weekend, I spent four hours at the North Tenmile trailhead which is located at the end of West Main Street in Frisco. With the great weather we had, I expected it to be a very busy day and that's what it was. I counted 273 hikers in 75 different groups which was not so many that I couldn't keep track of the numbers, but not so few that I got bored sitting at the trailhead. It was a far better place to be than sitting in traffic on I-70!

There are several responsibilities of a trailhead host and they are: 1) to appear as a knowledgeable and professional representative of the U.S. Forest Service; 2) answer questions by hikers about the trail; 3) advise hikers of any potentially hazardous situations (such as falling trees if it's windy or lightning if it appears a possibility) and 4) send a report to the Forest Service with statistics recorded during the period of hosting. In a normal year, which

2020 was definitely NOT, an additional responsibility would be to hand out any desired literature to interested hikers, such as a copy of the trail map, wilderness regulations, reasons for leashing your dog, camper registration cards, and even altitude sickness brochures if a hiker may be concerned about it. The Forest Service has given ESWA permission to hand out business cards and/or brochures if we desire and I always do so when appropriate.

As an aid to answering hiker's questions, I've found that it's very useful to have done a hike on the selected trail and have notes available on the condition of the trail, distance and elevation at important points on the trail, and any scenic or notable points along the trail. Those are the most common questions that I've had from hikers and they are always very appreciative of the information.

During the four hours I spent at the trailhead, I answered questions by 41 people and/or groups. The most enjoyable conversation I had was with a group of six people from the Midwest. They had never been up that trail before and were very appreciative of all the information I provided and the questions I answered. My favorite question and one several people asked was, "Will I [or we] see any moose?" I tell them they might, but that I can't guarantee it. And I tell them that if they do, keep a safe distance and do not try to take a selfie with it!

So if you've never taken the opportunity to be a trailhead host, I encourage you to give it a try. I'm sure you will discover it to be a very rewarding experience! VWRs may sign up to be Trailhead Hosts by going to the Volunteer tab on our website and signing up for a 3-hour shift.



***For nearly two decades, A-Basin staff have donated generously to their Employee Environmental Fund, of which ESWA has been a steady beneficiary. Our enduring THANKS.***



## 2021 SCHEDULE - See articles inside for details

Sat, June 5: VWR Training Day

Fri-Sun, June 11-13: Sawyer Training

Sat, June 19: Weedspotter Training Day

Sat, July 10: Weed Pull

Fri-Sun, July 16-18: Work trip with llamas to Slate Lakes

Sat, July 31: Weed Pull

Fri-Sun, July 30-August 1: Work trip with llamas to Lake Constantine

Fri-Sun, August 27-29: Work trip with llamas to Sopris/Brady

ESWA monthly planning meetings are held the 2nd Thursday of the month at 5:30PM. Check website for details. All are welcome!

## The Backroom on the back page

ESWA behind-the-scenes volunteers keep our members up-to-date, enhance existing and build new programs, and much more. Thanks to **Cindy Levin**, new website manager, **Merry Lynne Hamilton**, new database manager, and **Dave Owens**, inaugural TrailHead Host program father.

ESWA has additional openings for several important positions, including **Social Media Maven** (maintains our communications with Facebook and other online media), **Editors** (publications including newsletters, newspaper articles and ads, and other publications such as handouts, flyers, and cards), and **Hospitality Hosts** (contact and thank members and donors, organize and staff tables at social events).



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