

Fall is just around the corner



ANNOUNCING - ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF ESWA VOLUNTEERS

ESWA members, partners, and volunteers are invited to attend the Annual Celebration of our work on behalf of Wilderness!

Saturday, September 23 from 4-7 PM

Eagles Nest Community Center, Silverthorne [MAP](#)

RSVP [HERE](#) by Tuesday, Sept. 12

Join us for:

Good food and fellowship

Short program recapping season

Volunteer awards

Photo contest & Currie Craven award announcements

Remembrances of Ken Harper, Sawyer & VWR extraordinaire

ESWA swag for sale

Door prizes!

The event is free, but a \$10 donation is suggested.

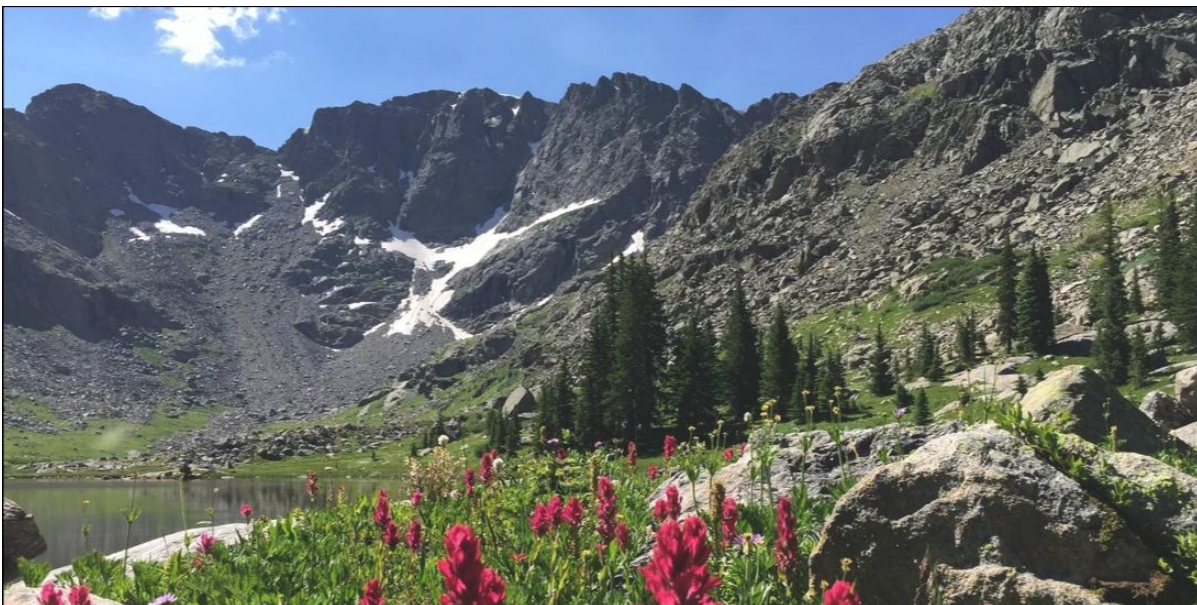
Questions? Send us an [email](#)



Krista Hughes, 1st place, 2022

SUBMIT YOUR PHOTOS BY SEPTEMBER 8 to our renamed **JOHN FIELDER PHOTO CONTEST**, honoring John's memory and his many contributions to preserving Wilderness. Submit up to three of your favorites taken in the Eagles Nest, Flat Tops, Holy Cross, or Ptarmigan Peak Wilderness Areas. Send them to photocontest@eaglesummitwilderness.org.

See ESWA's website [HERE](#) for details. Winners will be determined by the judges' opinion of how well the photos represent the **wilderness characteristics of these Wilderness Areas**. Winners will be announced at ESWA's September 23 Annual Celebration. ESWA uses the winning photos to create notecards for fundraising purposes.





Guy Warren, 1st place, 2021

YOU ARE INVITED TO SUBMIT CURRIE CRAVEN AWARD NOMINATIONS



Currie Craven

September 8 is the deadline for submitting your nomination to award@eaglesummitwilderness.org. The Currie Craven Award is our premier recognition of exemplary advocates of the promotion and protection of Wilderness. John Currie Craven was the co-founder of ESWA and president for more than two decades. We seek to honor those who, like Currie, have toiled energetically and advocated vigorously in an enduring pattern of support for Wilderness. While nominees may come from any area, we focus especially on those whose efforts have included Colorado Wilderness Areas, especially in and near Eagle and Summit Counties. The inaugural award was presented in celebration of our first quarter-century in 2019. The nomination should clearly explain the qualifications of the nominee in 1,500 words or less. Details about the award and previous awardees [HERE](#).

JUST A FEW WEEKS LEFT IN PATROL SEASON

It's hard to believe, but only a few weeks remain in our 2023 VWR patrol season. So, if you're a VWR and haven't quite gotten around to your four minimum required patrols or trailhead host sessions on trails leading into our four Wilderness areas, time is of the essence.

Remember you can combine a patrol with a trailhead hosting session. Bring a buddy and take turns hiking and hosting, or do a 2-hour patrol with a 2-hour host session at the trailhead before or after your patrol.

Can't get away for four straight hours? No problem. Although 4-hour patrols or THH sessions are preferred, you can do two patrols or hosting sessions of two hours each, which combined will equal one of your required 4-hour outings. Need a buddy? – Contact your VWR Mentor.

Thanks to the 89 VWRs who, as of August 28, have completed a total of 1,750 hours over 363 patrols, and 95 hours over 20 trailhead hosting sessions – WOW! VWRs are at the heart of ESWA's mission to protect our Wilderness Areas. Hint: The VWR of the Year Award is still up for grabs.

ESWA VOLUNTEERS HARD AT WORK ON OUR DELUGE TRAIL

On Saturday, August 12, seven ESWA volunteers spent a challenging but productive day making improvements to the Deluge Lake Trail out of east Vail. One of the steepest trails in the Eagles Nest Wilderness, Deluge climbs over 3,000 vertical feet in only four miles! Just hiking this trail is tough, but ESWA's intrepid volunteers carried pick axes and other heavy tools and performed trail work along the way.

ESWA's hardy sawyers had cleared the trail of many fallen trees using cross-cut and other hand saws. On the 12th, our volunteers cleaned out clogged drainage bars, built new drainage bars, re-widened the trail where needed, and lopped encroaching vegetation.

ESWA "adopted" the Deluge Trail under the Vail Valley Mountain Trail Alliance's Adopt-A-Trail Program. Businesses and non-profits in Eagle County agree to spend several days each summer helping maintain and improve a specific trail they adopt under this program. ESWA picked Deluge since we are the toughest bunch around!



Thanks to ESWA volunteers (left to right in photo) Ellie Finlay, Mike Browning, Wendy Klein, Ellen Miller, Augusta Molnar, Frances Hartogh, and Debbie Snyder, and VVMTA supervisor Molly DeLallo who took the photo.

AN IMPRESSIVE SEASON FOR ESWA SAWYERS

The Sawyer season is coming to an end. In 37 outings ESWA's Sawyers have cleared over 500 trees from trails in Eagle and Summit Counties. Due to the lower number of deadfalls in 2023, ESWA's 16 adopted trails were mostly cleared by mid-summer, so our Sawyers have been busy helping the USFS on trails that might otherwise not be cleared.

One of those trails is the East Lake Creek trail near Edwards. On August 22nd, 13 of ESWA's Sawyer volunteers, led by head sawyer Zach Kauk, cleared the first 5.2 miles from the public trailhead and re-opened about 0.5 miles of trail that had been closed since before the pandemic. This required clearing 53 trees - including the largest diameter trees of the season! Thanks to all our Sawyer volunteers!



Section of E. Lake Creek before clearing

The trail appears!

GRANT SEASON IS UPON US!

Every year ESWA applies for grants that allow ESWA to significantly supplement USFS resources. In the past, we have helped purchase signs, rent llamas, buy tools, fund work teams, professionally treat noxious weed infestations, print educational materials, and purchase lumber/hardware supplies (e.g., for bridges). This month we begin applying for a grant to significantly repair Meadow Creek Trail and plan future Lily Pad Lake restorations. If you'd like to help organize this project and grant, or other projects, contact Jim Alexander, jimofcolorado@gmail.com. It's a great way to contribute to the Wilderness even after the summer season is over.

KEN HARPER MEMORIAL FUND

Thank you to the many generous folks who've already donated to the Ken Harper Memorial Fund. Already over \$3,000 in donations have been received! As mentioned in last month's newsletter, Ken passed away on July 15 after a courageous battle with pancreatic cancer. ESWA's board is in discussion on how best to utilize these funds in Ken's memory. Donations may be made on ESWA's [website](#) – in the Comments box, please note that the donation is to the Ken Harper Memorial

Fund.

IN HONOR OF JOHN FIELDER, HELP US KEEP WILDERNESS WILD!

ESWA members are mourning the loss of photographer John Fielder. This August 26 Vail Daily [article](#) recalls some of the stories surrounding John's extraordinary photographic tribute to our Wilderness Areas, including the amazing rescue of Earl, John's lost llama, by ESWA VWR Brad Benz.

ESWA Chair Karn Stiegelmeier writes: "The passing of our Wilderness crusader, John Fielder, is an indescribable loss for our interests. John used photography to share his love and awe of nature's beauty. He founded Westcliffe Publishers in 1982 with his first book of photographs, and continued producing a total of 50 photo books. He is known for encouraging everyone to observe carefully, understand our relationship with wild places, and work to protect them. John traveled throughout Colorado to photograph and share his stories and photos, declaring 'there is no more beautiful place on Earth than Colorado' and 'very few places more fragile.' In John's 50 years of photographing Colorado, he was always involved in protection efforts, at the same time as producing his books and calendars and offering innumerable outdoor photography classes."

"John had been living in Summit County since 2006, and many of his photos are in the Eagles Nest Wilderness, or a backdrop of the Wilderness from his home. His daughters and grandchildren will continue to enjoy his home here in Summit County.

He donated thousands of his favorite photographs to History Colorado, including photos of 28 mountain ranges, 44 Wilderness Areas, and all of Colorado's 64 counties."

"Fielder has been recognized with multiple awards from many entities noting his environmental stewardship efforts. With permission from John's family, ESWA has renamed our annual photo contest to the **John Fielder Photo Contest**, in John's memory."

THANKS TO OUR LLAMAS FOR A GREAT SEASON





ESWA organized three more llama-supported work trips in August, including our first work trip in the Flat Tops Wilderness! Thanks to our colleagues from the US Forest Service, and our friendly llamas Dom and Monty, for making these trips a success!

Gore Lake. On August 4-6, nine volunteers and four USFS colleagues hiked to beautiful Gore Lake and Snow Lake, and restored illegal campsites, cleared trails, and inventoried conditions.



Gore Lake work crew

Thanks to USFS Ranger Mark Steinbrecher and colleagues Maddie, Shane, and Tate, and volunteers Brad Benz, Mike Browning, Frances Hartogh, Peter Hoffman, Margo MacDonnell, Todd & Lynette Nice, and Eric Suter.

Willow Lakes. On August 18-20, eight volunteers and three USFS colleagues hiked to Willow Lakes. They cleared almost 40 illegal campfire rings, re-posted a sign, and closed a social trail. Thanks to USFS Rangers Matt Barnes and Mark Steinbrecher, their intern Eliza, and volunteers Dave Brewster, Ken Christie, Mike Cushman, Marshall Hull, Aurora Kuras, Deana & Rick Pratt,

and Mandy Zatynski.



Willow Lake work crew



Our intrepid work group braved challenging conditions for ESWA's first multi-day trip into the beautiful Flat Tops Wilderness

Flat Tops Wilderness. “Where does this trip fall on the llama trip suck meter? Pretty high, all considered,” said Mark Steinbrecher, Wilderness Ranger with the Holy Cross Ranger District, who was leading our four-day trip into the Flat Tops. But that was after two days of heavy, regular rain. On days three and four we were treated to beautiful skies pocked with interesting cloud formations, none of which rained on us. Whew!

This was a historic trip for the ESWA/Forest Service partnership. It was our first work trip ever into the Flat Tops, the “Cradle of Wilderness,” where a Forest Service employee named Arthur Carhart first inspired the idea of the federal government protecting wild lands. Here is what Carhart said to his boss, Aldo Leopold, after returning from surveying the Flat Tops area for the Forest Service’s planned development of summer cabins:

There are great values of this type to be found in the several forests of the Nation, which in order to return to the greatest total value to the people, not only of the Nation, but of the world should be preserved and protected from the marring features of man made constructions. These areas can never be restored to the original condition after man has invaded them, and the great value lying as it does in natural scenic beauty should be available, not for the small group, but for the greatest population. 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.

— Arthur Carhart,

"Memorandum For Mr. Leopold, District 3, December 10, 1919"

ESWA is now a part of the stewardship of this “highly prized scenic feature” of our country. And there is much work to be done!



Our intrepid crew of 13 began to chip away at it. We arrived at the expansive Turret Meadows on Thursday evening and set up camp just before the rains hit. We were joined by the Trails and Wilderness Manager Kat Bazan, our liaison to the Holy Cross Ranger District, who was “walking home” from a leadership meeting near Trapper’s Lake to the Sweetwater Lake trailhead where we had started. Kat worked with us much of the day Friday, leading part of our group doing trail work, and then headed out to be with her family for the weekend.

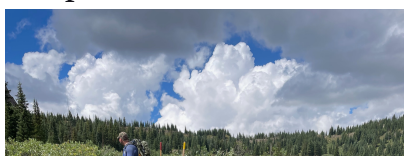
We decided to keep our basecamp at Turret Meadows for the entire time and work out of there rather than move camp up higher to the Shingle Peak area in order to dodge more weather risks and colder air. There was plenty of work to be done within a few miles of camp. We split into several different crews, some of which restored fire rings that had been previously marked, some installed and maintained water bars and other drainage on the trail, and the true hard cores chipped away lopping the copious willows around timberline that crowd the trail. Friday afternoon we worked in some very heavy rain and light hail, all of us getting completely soaked – but everyone soldiered on for the Wilderness!



Saturday opened sunny and set us up for a productive day of similar work. Most everyone who wanted to were able to get up around Shingle Peak for spectacular views of the area. We even were able to have a full-crew happy hour, dinner, and chat together that evening without having to cower under trees. Everyone agreed that the trip had been productive, yet “fun,” and had been well engineered by Mark and his Forest Service colleagues, including Monty and Dom. It was the llamas’ final trip of the year, and they were very happy to have relatively light duty, getting to hang out and graze in a generous meadow for two solid days.

Trip Takeaways:

We really got a first-hand feel for the differences in patrolling and working in the Flat Tops compared to most of our other





Wilderness territory. We would encourage anyone who is interested to get into this Turret Creek area, but to be aware of some of these factors:

This is a high-use area for a couple of guide outfits who have set up temporary wall-tent camps in the valley. These are currently active, with pack trains going in and out with supplies and guests. They will continue to be active through hunting season. Mark and some of the volunteers inspected the camps and found minor violations that Mark will speak with the permitting agents at the USFS about, and these will be addressed accordingly.



We had a good deal of interaction with the guides and guests, most of which was excellent, but there were some tricky aspects to it as well. Horses and mules do not like llamas! There are also dynamics around livestock management via gates that need to be carefully considered when traveling in this area. Leave gates as they are, even if they are just temporary gates such as ropes.

The trails are more wild than in other Wilderness Areas in which we work. As the USFS and ESWA are able to chip away at Turret Creek Trail, for example, this will have good results for the

Wilderness (lessening trail widening and erosion as well as improving the user experience). Improving the trails will also benefit relations with the guides, who travel the trails with heavily packed, wide load livestock.

The area is different enough in topography and elevation from our other Wilderness Areas that many of us noticed different species of living things – particularly insects! – than we are used to. This kind of diversity is so fun to see and learn about.



Thanks to volunteers Brad Benz, Mike Browning, Jim Chastain, Emily & Steve Elder, Frances Hartogh, Eric McConnell, Brian Underwood, Lee Vitgenos and USFS Rangers Kat Bazan, Mark Steinbrecher, and their colleagues Josh, Max, and Shane.

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.