

EAGLE POST 50

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

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BEFORE WE BEGIN... Update of ESWA Programs:

Our newest **ADVOCACY** campaign, for the protection of the Homestake Valley, was featured on the front page of the [VAIL DAILY](#) (29 June).

VOLUNTEER WILDERNESS RANGERS hit the trails: Folks who signed up for VWR training (which was cancelled due to COVID) are accompanying our existing VWRs on their patrols, getting a head start for training day next year. If that is of interest to you, please send us an [email](#).

Daytime **TRAIL PROJECTS** will be possible (the 4 overnight trips to deep backcountry lakes have been postponed to 2021 due to COVID). Watch for announcements.

WEED WARRIORS go native: As part of the ESWA **WeedSpotter** program, we thought it would be fun to take a look at our area's rich population of *native* plants as well! The [Betty Ford Alpine Gardens](#) in Vail has agreed to a private tour of their lovely gardens on the afternoon of Thursday, **August 13**. Space is limited, if you're interested send us an [e-mail](#).

July 2020

Dear *|FNAME|*

Greetings! Our topic this month:
**REACHING TODAY'S YOUNG PEOPLE
WITH LEAVE NO TRACE**



By **ANDREW LEARY**

INTRODUCTION

Parents today face a challenge greater than any previous generation: how to combat the relentless assault on the lives of their children as invisible electromagnetic waves penetrate the sanctity of their once-secure homes, seducing with games, phones, and endless attractions of social media. Parental attempts especially to teach the values of the natural world - the value of solitude in wilderness, for example - are thwarted at every turn. One's inclination of course is to limit or prohibit a child's use of such devices during outside excursions. Below, however, Andrew Leary, Outreach Manager of Leave No Trace, suggests that we embrace the technology, and put it in service on behalf of the natural world. He leads a team that has created an entire program aimed at nurturing a sense of stewardship for the outdoors in young people.

Reaching Today's Young People with Leave No Trace By Andrew Leary

Today's Leave No Trace stewardship messaging grew out of a need to minimize impacts on public lands more than five decades ago. The Wilderness Act of 1964 was a major catalyst for more people spending time recreating on public lands. For many, the concept of Wilderness is synonymous with ideas like protection and stewardship. To reach the next generation of potential Wilderness stewards, however, we need to consider the role of the outdoors in their lives today. What may have been relevant for past generations of outdoor enthusiasts looks very different for today's new outdoor recreationist.

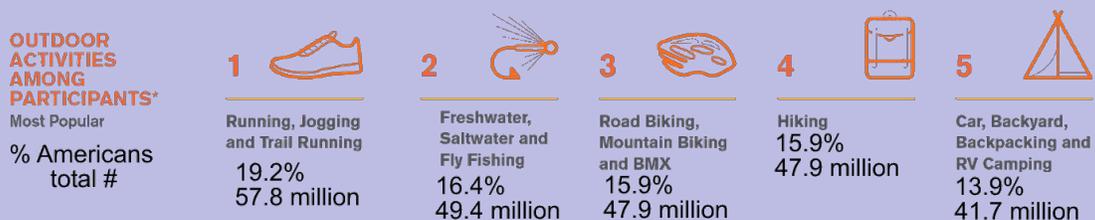


Fig. 1. Data and graphics from the Outdoor Industry of America's 2019 Outdoor Participation Report

Close to Home Recreation

Today's outdoor recreationist is experiencing settings that are predominantly not based in the backcountry. Data from a 2019 report from the Outdoor Industry of America (OIA) reveal that more than 63% of people travel only ten miles from their homes for their outdoor activities. Walk into any REI store and you will see the significance of that statistic. Yes, you may find backcountry items like tents, multiday backpacks, and sleeping bags on the back wall of your local REI, but think about the aisles that you first have to walk past: biking equipment, Yeti coolers, pet accessories, car camping items, and an always growing selection of outdoor running shoes. Close-to-home outdoor

recreation is here and requires our attention if we want to help connect with the newest generation of outdoor recreationists.

Leave No Trace: Beyond the Boundary

At its heart, Leave No Trace is rooted in values like responsibility, respect, and caring for the natural environment. For many young people who are just discovering the outdoors for the first time, however, close to home recreation opportunities may not be closely linked with these values seen through an outdoor lens. Let's take Leave No Trace beyond the boundaries of public lands and help establish connections between young people's daily lives and values for protecting the outdoors. Building values in young people can be extremely successful when done intentionally.

In a former life I was a YMCA summer camp director in Michigan. Frequently throughout the summer, I would receive emails or phone messages from parents whose children had been home from camp for about a week. "I don't know what you all taught our son, but since coming home from camp he sets the dinner table, helps to serve food, and clears the table without [the parents] having to ask! Thank you!" It wasn't until later in my professional career that I realized that what those parents were experiencing was the result of daily interactions with responsibility at camp. You see for two weeks, every day the entire camp would eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner in the dining hall. For each one of those days, a pair of campers would be assigned to set the tables before- and clean up after each meal. Additionally, the food was served family style so at any given time when a serving bowl of food would empty, someone from the table would go get a refill from the kitchen staff.



The dining hall experience can provide a foundation for daily, repeatable opportunities to practice responsibility

As I reflect back on those camp occurrences now, there is no way that a young person would have brought home that level of responsibility if they had only encountered those meal duties once or twice throughout the two-week camp session. Therein lies the key: regular interactions with values and their associated modeled behaviors. The same exact thing can be said for Leave No Trace. If we bring stewardship values and messaging into

young people's lives through frequent, close-to-home outdoor recreation like biking, fishing, jogging, car camping, or hiking (a list of the top five most popular activities for young people aged 6 to 17 years old according to OIA), there is a far greater likelihood that those values for protecting the outdoors will carry over to those less-frequented trips into Wilderness. We can go a step closer to home by engaging young people in what it means to be responsible, respectful, and caring towards the outdoors in gardens, parkways, and local community parks. It counts; it all matters.



Fig. 3. One of the best ways to positively promote Leave No Trace stewardship through popular social media platforms

Technology and Social Media

While the frequency of learning opportunities will help shape a young person's outdoor ethic, so too will its relevance in their own lives. One way to approach stewardship is through technology and social media. I'll go as far to say that seeking out natural backdrops to take photos or selfies for social media is the newest form of outdoor recreation. Whatever your opinion may be of technology and the outdoors, I encourage you to be respectful of someone's choice to use technology in the outdoors and see it as an enormous opportunity to promote Leave No Trace ethics.

According to the Pew Research Center, 95% of American teenagers aged 13-17 have access to a smart phone. Additionally, this same group enjoys spending time on apps like YouTube, Instagram, SnapChat, and Facebook. Unsurprisingly, traditional education (even environmental education) has rejected or prohibited this type of technology use.

Yes, there are shocking statistics related to screen time and mental health issues in our society. We need less screen time. It's pretty clear to me, however, that social media is the dominant form of media. What if instead of following the "party line" we took an approach that encouraged young people to use technology to help spread the message about protecting the outdoors? Today's young people are hyper proficient with the hardware, the software, and enjoy spending time on both! What if every photo that was taken in Ptarmigan Peak, Holy Cross, and Eagles Nest Wilderness Areas included a message of stewardship and promoting Leave No Trace?

If we can invest our collective and individual energies into more frequent and relevant stewardship messages, I think there is a bright future for protecting public lands and overall responsibility for the environment. Let's invite more diversity of age and color into the environmental movement by intentionally making it more inclusive, celebrating what is new rather than making it conform to the past. Thank you to all of you who make Summit and Eagle County outdoor experience a little bit more enjoyable by educating the public about Leave No Trace.

Tips and considerations for reaching today's young people with Leave No Trace:

- Someone doesn't have to be an expert in Leave No Trace when they are outdoors. Doing anything, no matter how small, is better than doing nothing at all.
- You don't have to spend time in "the great outdoors" to increase your connection to nature—help young people find those connections at home and in local communities
- Taking outdoor photos and selfies are forms of outdoor recreation for today's young people. Prohibition of these elements in the Leave No Trace movement will have very negative consequences for the future. Check out Leave No Trace's [Social Media Discussion Guide](#), which explores the intersection of Leave No Trace education and social media literacy.
- Youth-serving programs that take kids into the outdoors are essential to teaching young people about the natural world and increasing their affinity for nature. How can you lend your Leave No Trace skill set to these organizations and their staff?
- Leave No Trace are a set of guidelines, not the rules of the outdoors.
- Through this lens of seeing Leave No Trace as a value system, consider how you can use the Seven Principles of Leave No Trace to remind people what actions they can take to protect the outdoors.



ABOUT ANDREW LEARY

Andrew Leary is the National Outreach Manager at the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics in Boulder, CO. As a member of the Center's Education Team, Andrew designs outcomes-driven education programs for adults, youth, and the tourism industry. He is a native of the midwest but calls Colorado home with his wife, 5 month old son, and black lab. Outside of Leave No Trace, Andrew is an expedition ski guide for Polar Explorers, a Chicago-based company that leads expeditions to the North Pole, South Pole, and Greenland.



POSTSCRIPT: Can you name the

SEVEN LEAVE NO TRACE PRINCIPLES?

Here is ESWA's handy mnemonic in 7 words:

1. **Future** - plan ahead (maps, rules, etc)
2. **Footing** - stay on durable surfaces
3. **Fire** - fire rings are ugly. Consider using a stove instead
4. **Filth** - do right with poop and garbage

5. **Flora** - leave it - flowers, artifacts, etc.

6. **Fauna** - don't harass the critters

7. **Friends** - those campers over there appreciate quiet

An expanded version is [HERE](#) and the official LNT website is [HERE](#).



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 was just mailed. it

is chock full of information about our 2020 season and the adjustments due to the pandemic. If you didn't receive your copy, then *we don't have your mailing address*. Please [send an email](#) to us with your mailing address. The newsletter contains about two dozen fun and informative articles about us - past, present, and future.

Follow us



Join us! Next Planning Meeting Thursday, JULY 9 at 5:30 PM, We plan to hold the meeting outdoors - socially distanced - at Bighorn Park, East Vail ([MAP](#)). Be sure to check the [website calendar](#) for confirmation, or send us an [email](#).

CITY MARKET COMMUNITY REWARDS PROGRAM

Please [register](#) your City Market Value Card, linking it to FENW, which will end rebates to us without compromising your earned fuel points. Please note that each card holder may only sign up for one tax exempt organization. **THANKS!**



The 7 LEAVE NO TRACE PRINCIPLES

in one simple mnemonic - 7 "F" words:

1. FUTURE: Plan Ahead and Prepare. Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you'll visit. Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies. Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use. Visit in small groups when possible. Consider splitting larger groups into smaller groups. Repackage food to minimize waste. Use a map and compass to eliminate the use of marking paint, rock cairns or flagging.



2. FOOTING: Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces. Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow. Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams. Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary. In popular areas: Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites; walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy; keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent. In pristine areas: Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails; avoid places where impacts are just beginning.



3. FIRE: Minimize Campfire Impacts. Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry. Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light. Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires. Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand. Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, then scatter cool ashes



4. FILTH: Dispose of Waste Properly. Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food and litter. Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep, at least 200 feet from water, camp and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished. Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products. To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.



5. FLORA: Leave What You Find. Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them. Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species. Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches. .



6. FAUNA: Respect Wildlife. Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them. Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers. Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely. Control pets at all times, or leave them at home. Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.



7. FRIENDS: Be Considerate of Other Visitors. Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience. Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail. Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock. Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors. Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.

