

EAGLE SUMMIT WILDERNESS ALLIANCE

August 2022 Newsletter



SEASON UPDATE

WAY TO GO ESWA VOLUNTEERS!

ESWA's Volunteer Wilderness Rangers, Sawyers, and Trailhead Hosts have been having a great summer and are already making a huge impact. As of last week, 82 different ESWA VWRs have:

- Performed 201 patrols and logged 973 hours on the trail
- Encountered 5,030 day users and 379 overnight users
- Joined in 89 fire-safety conversations with Wilderness visitors
- Provided 11 Trailhead Hosting sessions at 7 different Wilderness Trailheads



The current leader in patrol hikes is Ellie Finlay (with 12), who is back on the trail this year in a big way, patrolling, sawyering, and hiking with youth! As usual, Tom Lawson (10) and Brad Benz (8) are not far behind....

As of July 1, our Sawyers had already:

- Conducted 27 outings on 16 different trails
- Cleared 1,024 trees off trails
- Logged 1,021 volunteer hours



Over one epic weekend in July, our sawyers cleared over 500 trees from the new alignment of the Surprise Lake Trail in preparation for the USFS to begin constructing a new trail next summer. In 2021, ESWA provided funding for the USFS to investigate and locate the new alignment, which will replace a portion of the existing trail that has suffered from severe erosion over the years.



ESWA VOLUNTEERS HIKE WITH EAGLE COUNTY YOUTH

ESWA's Ellie Finlay, Ken Harper, and Mike Browning teamed up with YouthPower365 to lead four hikes with Eagle County elementary school students. Local youth are our future leaders and Wilderness advocates!

YouthPower365 is an initiative of the Vail Valley Foundation to inspire, educate, and empower young people in the Vail Valley, particularly those from underserved communities. ESWA Volunteer Wilderness Ranger Adam Fenton is Elementary Programs Manager for Youth Power 365. Adam asked ESWA to help lead hikes of 15 to 20 fifth and sixth graders to introduce them to our local flora and fauna and the wonders of the outdoors.



Ellie Finlay and Ken Harper led a hike on June 24 up the Buck Creek Trail outside Avon. Ellie led a hike on July 11 on the Abram Ridge Trail above Eagle. Ken Harper led an excited group up the Stone Creek Trail also near Avon on June 27. Mike Browning took another group up the Abrams Ridge Trail on July 8.

Frequent stops to examine plants, rocks, trees, and animal tracks revealed the amazing details kids can discover when they stop, listen, and look closely. The identification of various scat found along the way was of particular interest. Special thanks to Ellie, Ken, and Mike for volunteering their time, and to Adam Fenton for facilitating this fun opportunity for ESWA volunteers and our local youth!

LLAMAS IN LEAGUE WITH ESWA VOLUNTEERS!



On the trail from Nolan Lake after a job well done.



Dominguez the llama enjoying a snack along the trail to Slate Lake.

On two successful llama-supported trips into Nolan and Slate Lakes, ESWA volunteers worked with our US Forest Service colleagues to restore high-alpine lake terrain and trails – and our lovely llamas helped lighten the load! There are still a few openings for the final two llama-supported trips of the season:

- **August 12-14:** Lake Charles
- **August 19-21:** Upper Constantine

Interested? Email Krista Hughes at krista.a.hughes@gmail.com.

NEW SIGNS FINALLY GOING UP!



The Dillon Ranger District and ESWA volunteers have made a good start on replacing old or missing signs on many trails in the Silverthorne area. These signs will be easier to read than the old signs, and installed higher to discourage vandalism and theft. This project has been a long time coming, because they were ordered in 2021 and took more than a year to arrive due to supply chain issues! ESWA is grateful to The Summit Foundation for providing the funds for the signs, and for understanding when they came a summer late.

ESWA VWRs Kurtis Barry, Dave Brewster, Sandra Nicholson, and Dave Owens helped the Forest Service install two Wilderness signs in July, at

the Meadow Creek trailhead and the new Arctic Placer trailhead in Silverthorne.

Sign installation is HARD work – in fact, one sign took five hours to erect due to our rocky “soil”!

SUCCESSFUL WORK DAY ON ESWA's ADOPT-A-TRAIL DELUGE LAKE LAKE

Seven hardy volunteers cleared over 30 trees, built water bars, removed musk thistle, and lopped overhanging foliage on the Deluge Lake trail at our July 30 work day. This gorgeous trail, which accesses one of the prettiest alpine lakes in Eagle County, is now a lot more passable! Thanks to Ken Harper and Zach Kauk for organizing the effort.



ESWA WEEDSPOTTER WEED PULLS

ESWA and FDRD joined forces on two days to pull nearly 2,000 Musk

Thistle from the lovely meadows at Hunters Knob in Silverthorne. We had about a dozen volunteers on each day. We are planning on a follow-up visit to Hunters Knob in August, contact Jim Alexander if you're interested (jimofcolorado@gmail.com).



Other projects have also attacked the pernicious Musk Thistle. During the Slate Creek trip, volunteers gathered and carried out 25 pounds of seed heads. And while placing signs on the Placer Trail, our intrepid Weedspotters pulled about a hundred thistles!

Also, the first week of August, the USFS and Osborn Industries will begin professional treatment of noxious weed infestations in Summit and Eagle Counties financed by funds the National Forest Foundation, Ski Conservation Grant provided through a grant to ESWA.

CORE ACT HIKES!

Join the amazing Susie Kincade, ESWA, and Wilderness Workshop for two opportunities to learn more about the beautiful and unique lands that would receive permanent protection if we can just get the Colorado Outdoor Recreation & Economy (CORE) Act passed. The CORE Act, supported by ESWA and under consideration in the US Senate this summer, is the result of decades of collaboration between diverse stakeholders.

- **August 12 Field Trip to Proposed Camp Hale National Historic Landscape, Friday, 9:00 am – 2:30 pm:** Tour Pando Valley where the US Army once housed 10,000 personnel, 4000 mules and 250 sled dogs during WWII.
- **August 18 Hoosier Ridge Hike, Thursday, 8:30 am–2:00 pm:** Hike into the proposed Hoosier Ridge Wilderness Area in Summit County. Explore a prime example of a native alpine ecosystem and enjoy expansive views in this part of the CORE Act.
- **September 14 Forest Bathing in Spraddle Creek addition to Eagles Nest Wilderness Area in the CORE Act, Wednesday, 9 am – 2:30 pm, Vail:** Discover Spraddle Creek, a proposed addition to Eagles Nest Wilderness area and part of the CORE Act. Enjoy some of the best aspen viewing in the Vail Valley.

If you've not yet had the pleasure of hiking with Susie, our famed Eagle County Naturalist Extraordinaire, you are in for a real treat. Reach out to her at susie@ebcmarketing.com or 970-328-5472 for more information and to register.

To learn more about the CORE Act and how you can help, visit <https://coreact.org/>.

MEMBER NEWS

It's a baby! Our heartfelt congratulations to Tim and Kelly Drescher on the birth of their son, Samuel Edward Drescher, on July 23. Tim reports that Mom and baby are doing great.



HOMESTAKE VALLEY SCIENCE DAY

On August 14, join our friends at Wilderness Workshop, Eagle River Watershed Council, and Walking Mountain Science Center for a fun hands-on exploration of the Homestake Valley's wonderful wetlands, which provide incredible biodiversity, native flora and fauna, and home to numerous threatened species. To learn more, [click here](#). ESWA supports the protection of these wetlands and opposes the construction

of the proposed Whitney Reservoir, which would destroy this precious resource.

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

- **August 12:** Camp Hale Field Trip
- **August 12-14:** Llama-supported Work Trip – Lake Charles
- **August 14:** Homestake Valley Science Day
- **August 18:** CORE Act Hoosier Ridge Hike
- **August 19-21:** Llama-supported Work Trip – Upper Constantine
- **September 14:** Spraddle Creek CORE Act hike
- **September 24:** ESWA Annual Meeting - Eagles Nest HOA Clubhouse, details TBA

HELP WANTED: WEBSITE MANAGER



ESWA is seeking a **website manager**. We use Wix, the friendliest program imaginable. It's all copy-and-paste with no coding, ever. If you can use Word, you can learn Wix. We'll teach you. Bonus: With Wix, you can easily and for free make your own website for weddings, family reunions, and so forth.

Please email info@eaglesummitwilderness.org with your interest.

TWO FREE WAYS TO PROVIDE ESWA MUCH-NEEDED FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- **Sign up for City Market & King Soopers Community Rewards – it's so easy!** If you don't yet have the card, please [sign up for one here](#). Then go to your [Community Rewards](#), choose your local store as your preferred store, and set ESWA as the charity to which you want to donate (search for Eagle Summit Wilderness Alliance or use ESWA's code VX077).

- **Sign up for Amazon Smile.** Amazon Smile offers the same products and same prices as the Amazon site. Amazon will donate to ESWA 0.5% of every purchase you make – and it costs you nothing. [CLICK HERE](#) to sign up. All you do is log in to Amazon using smile.amazon.com instead of amazon.com. Sign in through smile.amazon.com each time you shop, so you might want to bookmark that page.

SUPPORT OUR PARTNERS, FRIENDS OF THE LOWER BLUE RIVER

The Friends of the Lower Blue River online auction benefits FOLBR's land stewardship, sustainability, and philanthropy efforts in the Lower Blue River Valley. Your participation will support programs, including:

- The Safe Soils/Climate Resiliency Initiative;
- The Livestock Emergency Evacuation Plan;
- Partnerships with the Blue River Watershed Group and other environmentally and community-focused non-profits; and
- Collaboration with Middle Park Conservation District, Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust, Lake Dillon Fire District, and more.

To reach the online auction site, [click here](#).

Donate

Special thanks to our partners for making our work possible!





The Summit Foundation
Soul of the Summit



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Eagle Summit Wilderness Alliance

P.O. Box 4504

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