

EAGLE SUMMIT WILDERNESS ALLIANCE

January 2022 Newsletter



THANKS FOR RENEWING YOUR ESWA MEMBERSHIP!

We greatly appreciate the 158 ESWA members who've already renewed memberships or become new members for 2022! Contributions from new and renewed memberships have totaled over \$17,000. Members make everything ESWA does possible – THANK YOU!

Now, if you are one of those who just haven't *quite* gotten around to renewing, it's not too late! Renewing your membership is easy to do:

- Join online at the Join/Renew page on the ESWA website by clicking [HERE](#), or
- Mail a check to ESWA at P.O. Box 4504, Frisco, CO 80443-4504.

Memberships are on a calendar-year basis, and any renewals/donations received on or after 10/1/2021 are counted towards your 2022 membership. If you're unsure whether you've renewed for 2022, just send an inquiry to info@eaglesummitwilderness.org.

ESWA depends on your membership and support to allow us to continue to protect, preserve, and manage our three precious local Wilderness Areas. **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

DID YOU GET WILD LATELY?

Thanks to the Summit Daily for publishing our *Get Wild* column every Friday, with riveting articles on our local Wilderness Areas. Check out 2020-21 ESWA Chair Mike Browning's recent article on [Ptarmigan, the Alpine Master of Disguise](#).



And remember to read *Get Wild* each Friday, by going to the Summit Daily online and searching for "Get Wild." (Hint: The more clicks our column gets, the more likely Summit Daily is to continue this great educational opportunity. In fact, we plan to email the link out to ESWA's members each week, so, please click on it there, too – the more clicks, the better!)

And if you missed it, below is another timely recent *Get Wild* article, by Charles Pitman, a Mission Coordinator and Public Information Officer for the Summit County Rescue Group.

I'VE LOST THE TRAIL ... NOW WHAT?

Being lost in the wilderness is a frightening experience, yet there are some easy and inexpensive ways to improve your situation to relocate

your intended route.



In 2021 Summit County Rescue Group (SCRG) fielded a record number of calls for assistance. Of the 215 calls placed to Summit's 911 call center, a large number were from people who had simply lost the trail. There are two common situations we encounter and both can be easily rectified.

Losing the trail at night is often the result of a hike taking longer than anticipated. Altitude alone can increase a hiker's fatigue. The four-hour hike may take six or eight hours. Your intended departure time wasn't really at 9:00 a.m., but rather at 1:00 p.m. Did you adjust your destination to account for the later start? Was the hike longer to see

more scenery?

When night falls, trails will easily disappear unless you have a good headlamp. You may have a cell phone with a light, but if that phone has been on all day is the battery nearly drained? The easy solution is to always have a headlamp with spare batteries. New LED lights are powerful, long lasting, and inexpensive. They also free up your hands to grab onto handholds on tougher sections of a trail or to place in your pockets to keep warm. I have three headlamps in my pack, my main one, one backup, and one to loan the lost hiker we have found.

Often a hiker becomes lost by simply wandering off the trail, perhaps following a "social trail" or a thin game trail that has disappeared, or to get a better view. Then you realize you have entirely lost the main hiking route.

During winter months the trail that was quite obvious during your ascent may become completely obscured by the last hour's brief snowstorm or a significant wind event.

GPS phone apps, inexpensive and easy to use with some practice, will provide all the information you will need. We often receive distress calls from a lost hiker or snowshoer, and along with that call we are generally passed GPS coordinates that 911 Dispatch automatically obtains from the phone. Sitting at a dining room table we can plot the coordinates and tell the distressed hiker which way to travel to relocate the trail. We can also view the location in both the traditional map with the contour lines, or a Google Earth view so we can direct someone around a major band of rock or boulder field and towards an easier hiking route.

Using GPS apps does not require mobile phone connectivity. You simply pre-download the maps for the area in which you are hiking and you can immediately hike with confidence! However, we do highly encourage hikers to place their phone in "airplane mode" to conserve battery life while in the backcountry. These apps can be used to find trails and hike all over the world.

What is the best GPS app on the market? It's the one you know how to use. Download one and play around with it while walking around the neighborhood. There are several to check out, including Backcountry Navigator, Motion X, GAIA GPS, and CAL TOPO among others.



SCRG is always available to help locate and bring out a lost hiker, 24 hours a day in all weather conditions. Being able to know your own position at all times and prevent that 911 call will give you a wonderful peace of mind.

[Editor's note: Just a reminder that the first principle of Leave No Trace is "Future" – i.e. planning ahead for the hike, including starting early and bringing a map, GPS, proper clothes, and adequate food and fluids. In Wilderness Areas the Forest Service deliberately does not put lots of trail signs, nor do they include mileage for various lakes and places of interest - so plan ahead. And remember that calling 911 requires a cell signal, which is not always available in much of our local wilderness Areas]



Charles Pitman joined the Summit County Rescue Group in 2004 and is one of ten Mission Coordinators. He is also one of the team's Public Information Officers and served on the Board of Directors for eight years. SCRG, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, fielded 216 calls for assistance in 2021. The all-volunteer team of 70 members never charges a fee for rescues and relies on donations and grants for annual operations.



IMPORTANT ACTION ALERT: YES TO WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS!

Take a moment *before January 5* to write Senators [Bennet](#) and [Hickenlooper](#) asking them to sign onto Senator Durbin's letter to the Department of Interior urging the Bureau of Land Management to resume designating areas identified as "Lands with Wilderness Character" (LWCs) as Wilderness Study Areas. Of the many tools available to Interior to protect BLM's wildest places, none has the sweeping potential and durability as designating LWCs as new Wilderness Study Areas. There are 29 million acres of LWC lands in the West, including 3,771,395 in Colorado, that could be brought under meaningful interim protection. Protecting these lands in their natural, undeveloped state would play a significant role in tackling the climate

and extinction crises and in moving us toward the President's goal of protecting 30 percent of U.S. land by 2030 (30x30). [Here's](#) more information, and our friends at Wilderness Workshop have made it easy to write your Senators [here](#).

HAVE YOU SEEN THE WILD & SCENIC FILM FESTIVAL?



It turns 20 years old this month, and now has virtual options. The premiers begin on Jan. 13. Watch the trailer [here](#). Click [here](#) for the virtual schedule and to buy tickets. Locally, Colorado Open Lands will host the 2021 version on Jan. 8 at the Breckenridge Riverwalk Center and virtually. Click [here](#) for more information. If you would like to volunteer to help with the festival, click [here](#).

MEMBER FORUM

Welcome to our first Member Forum! We invite you to contribute your pics, reading or equipment recommendations, brief trip reports -- anything you would like to share with other lovers of Wilderness. Send your submissions to info@eaglesummitwilderness.org.



Dian Wilson joined ESWA for the first time this year, and made a special gift in honor of her son, Steve Elder, 2022 Chair, and her granddaughters Emily (VWR, Certified Sawyer) and Kit (VWR). Three generations of ESWAns!

[Donate](#)

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