

# Eagle Summit Wilderness Alliance honors longtime volunteer

Local [FOLLOW LOCAL](#) | 19h ago



**Lindsey Toomer** [FOLLOW](#)  
ltoomer@summitdaily.com



Eagle Summit Wilderness Alliance board member Ken Harper, left, presents John Taylor with the 2021 Currie Craven Award for Wilderness Stewardship. Taylor received the award for the work he has done to combat noxious weeds in Summit County.

*Bill Betz/Eagle Summit Wilderness Alliance*

The Eagle Summit Wilderness Alliance awarded John Taylor with the 2021 Currie Craven Award for Wilderness Stewardship last month, recognizing him for the work he's done in educating community members about the dangers of noxious weeds.

Alliance board member Karn Stiegelmeier said the Currie Craven Award is given annually in honor of its namesake, one of the founders of the Friends of the Eagles Nest Wilderness, which is the alliance's predecessor. Taylor has been working with the organization since its inception, and he's the second recipient of the award.

“The idea was to give an award to people who had put in a huge impact and to honor Currie Craven, who really started it all,” Stiegelmeier said. The first Currie Craven Award was given last year to Cyndi Koop, another active volunteer with the organization.

Taylor and his wife Pat have lived in Silverthorne for almost 30 years, during which they have been incredibly involved with local environmental volunteerism.

“We feel so fortunate to live here,” Taylor said. “It’s so great. I think we’ve both been involved in so many different volunteer organizations and just feel that we owe it to give back. It’s so important.”

Taylor said Summit County has about 32 species of noxious weeds with six to eight that are super common throughout the area, including yellow toadflax, musk thistle and Canada thistle.

“(They’re) just spreading like you wouldn’t believe, and it can go from one property to another,” Taylor said. “There are laws on the books in terms of noxious weed and controlling those, and I think we’re lacking some enforcement.”

Taylor said he thinks Summit County needs to increase its education around noxious weeds. He noted that oftentimes people will see noxious weeds and have no idea about their potential impacts because of how beautiful they can be.

Taylor said he first got into noxious weeds because he couldn’t compete with his wife’s passion for wildflowers.

“It’s kind of funny because Pat is a wildflower fanatic,” Stiegelmeier said. “She will point out all these little details about a wildflower, and then John will say ‘I can’t identify all those flowers.’ But John is remarkable in that he can identify the finest details of the noxious weeds, and some of them look a lot alike.”

The state has a running list of noxious weeds that are legally required to be removed, and Taylor served on the Colorado Department of Agriculture’s Noxious Weed Advisory Committee for several years contributing to the list.

Taylor said he’s grateful the alliance’s board has continued to see combating noxious weeds as something of importance.

“If we’re going to preserve our wild lands, we’ve got to call a halt to these invasive species taking over the forest land,” Taylor said. “I’m very appreciative of the wilderness alliance and what they’ve done.”

Taylor has worked with the alliance on several volunteer trips to collect noxious weeds, as well. The group made one trip this summer with about 19 folks, and Taylor said participants were appreciative of what they learned.

“John has just been at the forefront in a variety of organizations, especially with Eagle Summit Wilderness Alliance for over 25 years,” Stiegelmeier said. “He’s really remarkable for the hours ... he’s dedicated to educating people as well as orchestrating contractors and volunteers to do work.”

# Support Local Journalism

As a Summit Daily News reader, you make our work possible.

Now more than ever, your financial support is critical to help us keep our communities informed about the evolving coronavirus pandemic and the impact it is having on our residents and businesses. Every contribution, no matter the size, will make a difference.

Your donation will be used exclusively to support quality, local journalism.

**[DONATE](#)**