
Summertime...and ESWA is hard at work!

1 message

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[ESWA HOME](#)[VOLUNTEER](#)[BECOME A MEMBER](#)[DONATE](#)**2023 ESWA SCHEDULED SUMMER/FALL EVENTS**

July 8 & 18 - Summit County Weed Pulls

July 8 - Wilderness Workshop Homestake Valley [Bio-Blitz](#)

July 15 - Workday on reroute of Surprise Lake Trail, Eagles Nest W.

July 16 - Second workday on Surprise Lake reroute

July 19 - ESWA's Adopt-A-Trail Deluge Lake 1st work day

July 21-23 - Llama-supported work trip to Wheeler/Lost Lakes, Eagles Nest W.

August 4-6 - Llama-supported work trip to Gore Lake, Eagles Nest W.

August 12 - ESWA's Adopt-A-Trail Deluge Lake 2nd work day

August 18-20 - Llama-supported work trip Willow Lakes, Eagles Nest W.

August 24-27 - Llama-supported work trip Flat Tops Wilderness

To be scheduled (check August 1 newsletter for dates):

- More Weed Pull Days
- End-of-Season Party

29 NEW VWRs TRAINED AND ON PATROL!

ESWA and the USFS trained 29 new Volunteer Wilderness Rangers last month, and all have completed their mentor hikes! This year we had a record number of new VWRs from Eagle County – a special shout-out to ESWA Board member Colleen Gauron for recruiting her Eagle friends to become VWRs. Thanks to everyone who helped organize the training, including Kat Bazan, Joan Betz, Bill Betz, Mike Browning, Frances Hartogh, Zach Kauk, Eric Malmberg, and Karn Stiegelmeier. Check out these [photos](#) from training day.



Dog-off-leash VWR training scenario – Tamale Finlay, model pup
And our VWRs have been busy – through June 23, they'd already:

- Performed 67 Patrols
- Patrolled 345 miles
- Encountered over 2,000 trail users and 246 dogs (73% on leash)
- Conversated with 1,259 visitors



Did you know that Trailhead Hosting is the best way to encounter the greatest number of trail users? For instance, on one recent day at Acorn Creek, new VWR Anna Sienko and seasoned VWR Bill Betz greeted 380 people and 69 dogs in just three hours!



New VWR Anna Sienko Trailhead Hosting at Acorn Creek.

WEED & SEED WITH ESWA WEEDSPOTTERS

ESWA's WeedSpotters are excited about three events we're holding this summer – two weed pulls and a native-seed gathering! Every year, ESWA WeedSpotters gather to battle invasives, like Musk Thistles, Plumeless Thistles, and False Chamomile at several infestations. We also gather seeds from native plants at Copper Mountain, which can be used to restore damaged ecosystems. We hope you can join us at these events:



July 8 - Summit-County Wide Weed Pull – 8:00 am through lunch - Starting with breakfast at the Summit County Senior Center, upwards of 100 volunteers will learn about noxious weeds, then go to five weed infestations to pull weeds. ESWA is hosting the Hunters Knob location – where we have pulled weeds for four years now. Lunch will also be provided! Sign up through the [FDRD Website](#).

Note: The registration form requests a FDRD login; if you don't have one; just close that window and register.

July 18 - ESWA/FDRD Weed Pull at Hunters Knob – 4:00pm to 6:30pm – Since weeds pop up all summer, we will hit Hunters Knob a second time on a Tuesday evening. Sign up through the [FDRD Website](#).

August 23 - ESWA Seed Gathering – 9am to 1:30pm – ESWA volunteers will join Copper Mountain Staff to gather native seeds for later replanting and restoration of native habitat. To sign up for this, e-mail [Jim Alexander](#).

Adopt-an-infestation – There are always more weeds throughout Summit and Eagle Counties, and we are looking for volunteers to take on infestations – to pull, monitor, and report on these infestations throughout the summer. Questions, or to sign up for WeedSpotter events, e-mail [Jim Alexander](#).

HELP ESWA OPPOSE THE PARC ACT – NO SPORT-BOLTING IN WILDERNESS

We are asking our members to please email Congress today and voice your opposition to H.R. 1380. [A list of useful bullet points is linked here for reference.](#)

Here are the links for writing Congressman Neguse and Senators Bennet and Hickenlooper:

- [Write to Congressman Neguse](#)
- [Write to Senator Hickenlooper](#)
- [Write to Senator Bennet](#)

HELP REBUILD SURPRISE LAKE TRAIL JULY 15 & 16

The Surprise Lake Trail, a popular trail that starts near Lower Cataract Lake and winds uphill to Surprise Lake, has serious erosion problems. This month, ESWA will help build the new trail! Your help is essential -- no experience required. If you haven't been to Lower Cataract Lake, it is a stunningly beautiful spot.

Trail building is fun and extremely satisfying. Join the ESWA crew leaders and the US Forest Service to learn how trails are built as we move rocks and dirt and build rock structures. We bring our own lunch and there's a 2-3-mile hike to the worksite. We work at our own pace, taking breaks and heading back when we wish.

Three years ago, ESWA won grant money to plan the reroute. Next, the trail was laid out and all approvals were obtained. Last year, ESWA sawyers helped clear trees from the new trail corridor. This year there are two planned workdays, July 15 and 16. To join us for one or both days, contact [Dave Brewster](#).

FLAT TOPS ORIENTATION HIKE REPORT

The Flat Tops is one of the most spectacular and remote Wilderness Areas in Colorado. Hilltop Trailhead near Sweetwater Lake is managed by the Eagle-Holy Cross Ranger District and its Wilderness and Trail Manager, Kat Bazan. Last winter, Kat asked ESWA to adopt this part of the Flat Tops.

ESWA's first official action in the Flat Tops was a success! On June 9, ten VWRs hiked with USFS Kat Bazan and Mark Steinbrecher to get oriented to this new landscape. It was a gorgeous hike, and different from what most of us are used to patrolling. It is remote, a distance to the Wilderness boundary (though it all "feels" like Wilderness), has open sightlines, and is relatively low elevation (though that does not necessarily translate to easy walking)!



At the Flat Tops Wilderness boundary – finally!

The Hilltop Trailhead (above Sweetwater Lake) is the only currently approved access for VWR patrols. Our trip plan was to do a loop from the TH up Turret Creek to Johnny Meyers Trail/Nellie's Trail back to Turret Creek, and out - about 7 miles. Our route ended up being:

- Hilltop TH to Turret Creek Trail, turnaround at the second stream crossing, back to the intersection with Shingle Peak Trail.
- Shingle Peak Trail to the Wilderness Boundary (all up, some switchbacks, but not crazy steep.)
- Total RT 7.5 mi.
- 6 hours at a "group-orientation pace"

Some findings:

- The drive up the Sweetwater Canyon (Rd 150) to the TH was spectacular. We saw turkeys, osprey, a red-tailed hawk, a bald eagle, herons, and deer on this 30-minute drive. After leaving the Colorado River Road to Rd 150, you are driving through a neighborhood of homes and small ranches, so please observe the 25-mph speed limit.
- The TH has a lower parking area and one right at the TH that is a 4WD/clearance-required access of 1/2 mi. Spots are limited, so please be vehicle-efficient. The walk up from the lower lot would not be a delight, but it's very doable. We parked some vehicles lower, consolidated, and took a limited number to the upper lot.
- The trails had been muddy, so we saw lots of tracks, but no human footprints. Elk, bear, and deer sign abounded. We saw no other humans.
- We spotted hillsides of Arrowleaf Balsamroot, deer, an interesting bird nest on the side of an aspen, ticks, and some invasive thistles.
- There are no bridges over Turret Creek, so if you take that trail, as we tried, it involves getting wet. At this water level, we decided not to ford the main stream and turned around.

The ford is mild after runoff.

We highly recommend you hike first with someone who attended this orientation. We hope you enjoy patrolling the Flat Tops. If you would like to be put in touch with someone in this group, contact [Steve Elder](#). Steve can also provide you with a little Flat Tops VWR orientation guide. Big thanks to Kat and Mark for a great first ESWA hike in the Flat Tops!



Arrowleaf Balsamroot in the Flat Tops Wilderness

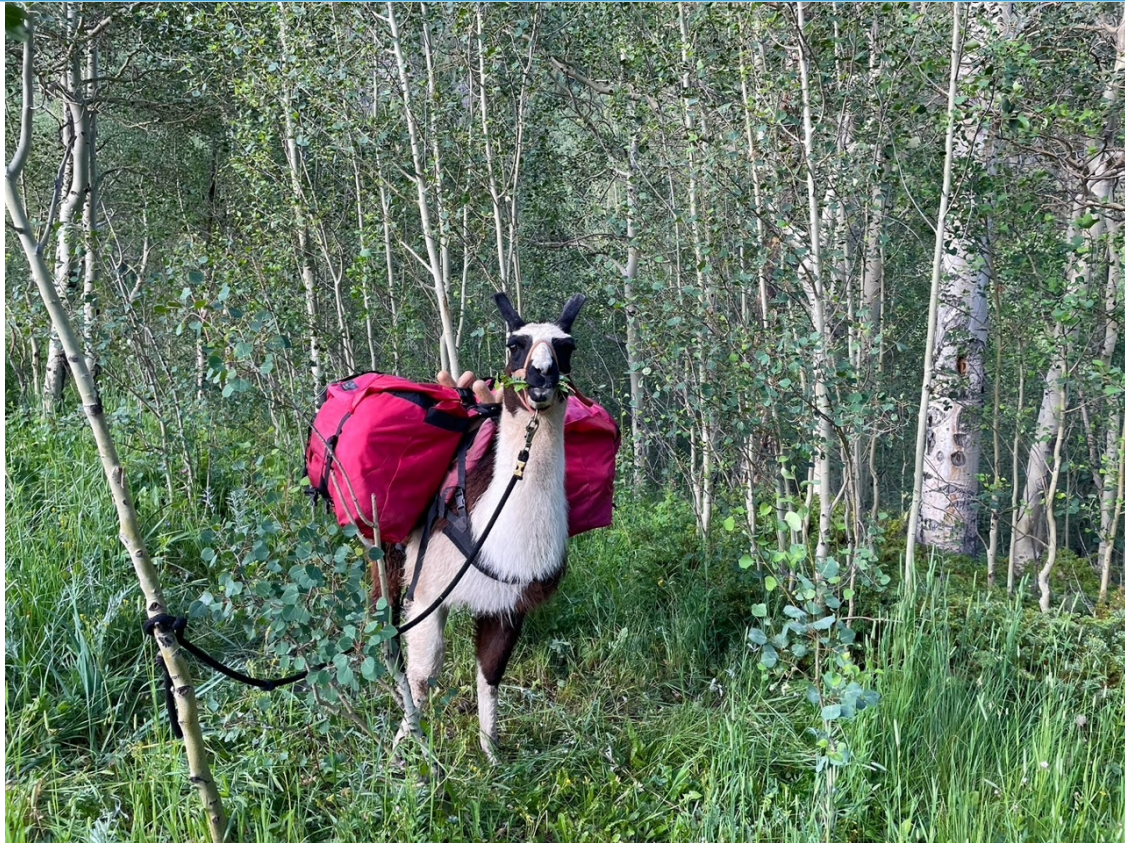
HOLY CROSS SOLITUDE MONITORING

Every five years, local Ranger Districts must do field data collection to help determine whether they are meeting their goals for Solitude with their Wilderness. Areas. Solitude is one of the benchmarks for Wilderness set forth in the 1964 Wilderness Act. We all know it is goal that is getting harder and harder to meet.

This year Kat Bazan – Wilderness and Trails Manager for the Eagle-Holy Cross Ranger District – asked ESWA to help collect this data on two heavily used trails within the Holy Cross Wilderness – Missouri Lakes and the Holy Cross trails. If time allows, we will also do solitude monitoring hikes on the Pitkin and Upper Piney trails in the Eagles Nest.

Twelve ESWA members volunteered and were trained by Kat on Friday, June 22. They will be heading out in July, August, and September to collect the required data, which will free up Kat's limited staff to do other important Wilderness work. Thanks to all those that volunteered.

LIMITED SPACES REMAIN FOR SUMMER LLAMA TRIPS



Does backpacking into one of our gorgeous Wilderness lakes accompanied by our faithful llamas, Dom and Monty, sound like fun? Just a few spaces remain on this summer's llama-supported, weekend work trips, but they are filling up fast. Email [Krista Hughes](mailto:Krista.Hughes@eswa.org) for information or to reserve your spot.

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:

1. Go to the Community Rewards page on the King Sooper's website: <https://www.kingsoopers.com/i/community/community-rewards>.
2. Click "Enroll Now."
3. If you already have an online account, sign in using your email and password and skip to step 6.
4. If you don't have an account, click "Create Account" at the bottom of the page.
5. Enter the requested information and click "Create Account."
6. Under "Find an Organization" search for Eagle Summit Wilderness Alliance.
7. Click Enroll.

THAT'S IT. NOW EVERY TIME SHOP YOU GIVE BACK TO WILDERNESS. THANK YOU.

Donate

Special thanks to our partners for making our work possible!



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