

EAGLE SUMMIT WILDERNESS ALLIANCE

February 2022 Newsletter



TRAINING DATES FOR 2022 ARE SET! GET TRAINED (OR RE- TRAINED) AS A VOLUNTEER WILDERNESS RANGER, TRAILHEAD HOST, OR CERTIFIED SAWYER

Become a USFS-Certified Sawyer! June 10-12, 2022

We're pleased to announce that ESWA and the USFS have teamed up again to offer training to become a Certified Class B-Bucker! With this certification and some practical experience, you can lead groups of ESWA certified & non-certified volunteers to clear Forest Service trails in Eagle and Summit County, Colorado.

Training will require you to complete an OSHA approved first-aid/CPR course and a half-day Zoom course on crosscut saws on your own schedule, and participate in a 3-hour live class from 5 to



8 pm on Friday June 10 and two days of field training

(approximately 8:30-5:00 each day) on June 11 and 12 at a location TBD in Summit or Eagle County.

We are also seeking volunteers who may not want to go through the certification process but would like to participate in our regular trail clearing events starting in late May. As long as you are able to hike a trail, you can help.

If you enjoy being part of a fun team, working outdoors, and contributing to help other people enjoy our great Wilderness Areas, please fill out this [short information request](#). Once you fill out this request, we'll add you to our list and provide more information. There is no commitment at this time. If you have questions, contact us at info@eaglesummitwilderness.org.

Become A Volunteer Wilderness Ranger or Trailhead Host – Or Both! May 21, 2022 Training Session

ESWA's signature Volunteer Wilderness Ranger program is accepting applicants for our May 21 training session. Volunteer Wilderness Rangers (VWRs) come in two flavors:

TRAILHEAD HOSTS and PATROLLERS.

They go through the same one-day training program and pursue the same objectives. Both are representatives of the United States Forest Service, meeting the public. Hosts stay at the trailhead, where they engage and educate trail users. Patrollers hike the trails, engaging and educating hikers and backpackers.



VWRs answer questions for trail users, and provide information including rules for Wilderness use, "Leave No Trace" Wilderness ethics, what to do when encountering wildlife, where campsites and campfires are allowed, and why dogs should be kept on leash. VWRs also inform interested

hikers about ESWA, and provide them with information on how to get involved.

New VWRs commit to:

- A half-day live training program (about an hour's worth of advance on-line video prep required).
- A follow-up mentor hike
- Completing a minimum of four, ½-day trips in the field between May and October (for Hosts, at least four 3-hour hosting session plus picking up and returning hosting materials).

Contact us at info@eaglesummitwilderness.org or visit our [website](#) for more info and an application form.



ESWA MEMBERSHIP EXCEEDS 200 - THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!

ESWA's dues-paying members have reached 215! We greatly appreciate all of the ESWA members who've already renewed their memberships or become new members for 2022.

On behalf of Wilderness, we are also grateful for the support of these businesses and foundations:

[Arapahoe Basin Ski Area](#)

[Infinite Scope, Inc. Custom Home Builder](#) (Dillon)

[West Huntley Gregory Law Firm](#) (Breckenridge)

[West Vail Liquor Mart](#)

[National Forest Foundation](#)

[The Summit County Foundation](#)

HAVEN'T RENEWED FOR 2022? TODAY'S YOUR DAY.

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.

ESWA depends on your membership and support to allow us to continue to protect, preserve, and manage our three precious local Wilderness Areas.



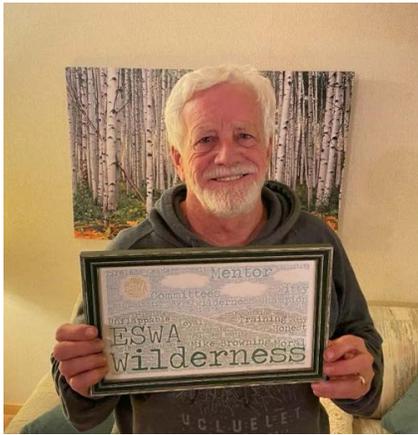
GET WILD LATELY?

Be sure to check out ESWA'S *Get Wild* column every Friday in the Summit Daily, with news near and dear to the hearts of Wilderness lovers. Here's just a sampling:

- [A Journey Over Ute Pass in 1866](#) (Bill Betz, Pebble Creek)
- [I've Lost the Trail. Now What?](#) (Charles Pitman)
- [What Is Wilderness?](#) (Mike Browning, Vail)
- [Winter Recreation Safety in the Wilderness](#) (Krista Hughes, Dillon)
- [Tales of Trails](#) (Drea Sanchez, Vail)
- [Dogs in the Wilderness](#) (Frances Hartogh, Vail)
- [One Crew's Impact on Trail Clearing](#) (Emily Elder, Frisco)
- [The Elusive Pine Marten](#) (Joan Betz, Pebble Creek)

Please click to read!

THANKS MIKE BROWNING



Thanks to outgoing ESWA 2020-2021 Chair Mike Browning for two years of great Leadership! In January, Mike Browning was acknowledged for all of his hard work and leadership over the past two years, navigating us through COVID, starting up new programs, and building the strength of ESWA in so many ways. Several ESWAns contributed words to his WordArt. From all of us and on behalf of Wilderness, THANK YOU, MIKE!!!!

MEMBER FORUM

Welcome to our 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.

This month, a tip from Mike Browning on his favorite east Vail trail for winter:

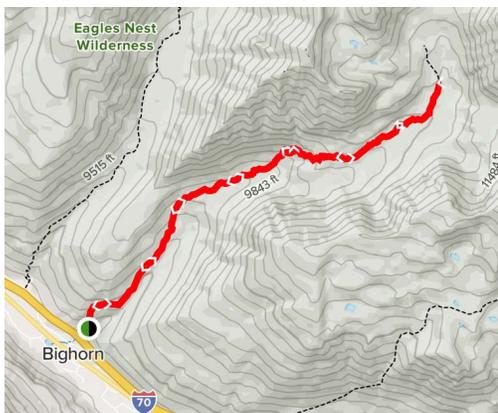
I hate to give it away, but the Bighorn Trail out of East Vail is a wonderful 2-3 hour hike or snowshoe in the winter. The steepest part is the first 20 yards, so don't give up. (Make sure you turn left (west) at the trailhead sign instead of going straight up the valley as some mistakenly do). After the first 4-5 steep twists, the trail heads west, climbs gradually, and then turns sharply north (right) for several hundred yards and past the Wilderness boundary sign.

Except immediately after a heavy snow, this first part of the trail is normally fine without snowshoes, but spikes are highly recommended. After the initial section described above, the trail heads straight up the valley at a moderate and steady grade. Aspen dominate the landscape, giving you open views on all sides. Elk, deer, moose, porcupine, and, later in the season, an occasional bear can be seen.

I often can go a half-mile or so up the trail before I start post-holing and need to put on snowshoes. 45 minutes or so past the Wilderness boundary sign, the trail goes downhill slightly and meets Bighorn Creek, which is a lovely place to stop and either turn around or rest. If you go on, the trail climbs up to a bench looking up to a lovely valley and steep

cliff band. On a nice day, the views here are wonderful.

I have never gone farther than this in mid-winter. Past the bench, the trail drops a bit into the valley and through more stands of aspens. It then starts to climb steeply up and eventually goes through a cliff band into the upper valley. In the summer, it is a couple more miles of delightful hiking to get to an old trapper's cabin that was refurbished several years ago and is left open for shelter (more info [here](#)). In the spring/early summer, you can work your way up snowfields (the trail itself goes through bushes and is hard to find in snow) and into this upper valley. However, be careful because this is avalanche territory. Once in the upper valley, the trail is often very hard to find in the snow, especially if you are the first brave soul to try to get to the cabin that year.



In the winter, I often see no one else on the trail, even in the lower section. It is calm, peaceful, and beautiful. And don't tell anyone, but in the Fall it is one of the finest aspen hikes in the valley, and usually has the fewest number of leaf peepers.

To get to the trailhead, take the East Vail exit, turn left under I-70, and head east for about a mile to near the top of a hill. Take a left on Columbine and go through a one-lane underpass to the north side of I-70. In summer there is parking for 5-6 cars, but in winter it is often reduced to 2-3 because of snow. Enjoy!

[Donate](#)

Special thanks to our partners for making our work possible!





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