

Winter is coming!



TODAY, NOVEMBER 1, is the *final day* to submit comments to the BLM in support of Alternative F to better manage over 2 million acres of public lands in Eagle County and beyond, including an expansion of the Castle Peak Wilderness Study Area. Use Wilderness Workshop's convenient [letter-writing app](#), and be sure to add that you express support for Alternative F, which would expand the WSA.



Photo credit: Colorado Wildlands Project

ESWA'S GRANT TEAM NEEDS YOU!

The Grant team needs help ...

Are you organized? The ESWA Grant team can use your help. This past year ESWA received about \$60,000 in grants that supported Llama Trips, Wilderness Stewardship Studies, and Noxious Weed Suppression. Fingers crossed, we expect to have a substantially larger grant program in 2024. This means we need someone to help track the logistics (purchases, scheduling, reporting) for all these projects. If this is you, it's a great way to contribute to the Wilderness, even when you can't get out on trails - day or night. E-mail Jim Alexander, jimofcolorado@gmail.com.

JOIN/RENEW YOUR ESWA MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

ESWA is a membership-based organization, and because we are an all-volunteer organization, 100% of your contribution goes directly to support our programs. Donations received starting October 1 will credit to your 2024 annual membership.

Visit the [Join/Donate](#) page on ESWA's website or donate through the [Colorado Gives Day website](#) (Colorado Gives Day is December 5, but you can donate through their website at any time). You can also mail a check to ESWA at P.O. Box 4504, Frisco, Co 80443-4504. Choose from several membership levels, each with its own reward (in addition to helping protect Wilderness).

Please be as generous as you can, and help ESWA "Keep Wilderness Wild!" Our heartfelt thanks to our committed donors and members:

Donations in honor/memory of the late Ken Harper, Sawyer extraordinaire

Helen Barker, Nancy Barton, Michael Browning & Frances Hartogh, Charles & Norma Carter, Sallie Dean & Larry Rousch, Sheri DiPaglia, Kent Erickson & Barbara Krichbaum, Ellie Finlay, Ingegerd Franberg, Colleen Gauron, James & Elizabeth Himmes, M. Johnsdotter, Kathy Langenwalter & Dick Cleveland, Augusta Molnar, Tom Newman, Lee Rimel, Janice Tonz, Patricia S. Wall & Brigid Kenny, Grace Wellwerts, Bruce & Anna Yanke, Valinda Yarberry

Other Donations in Honor or in Memory

James & Patricia Gilman, in honor of the late Fred Lewis

Steve & Jane Elder, in honor of Karn Stiegelmeier, the first female Chair of ESWA

Tom & Carol Oster, in memory of their son Jake

Targeted Gifts

Joan Tilden, for VWRs

Helen Barker, for renovation of DRD station Kiosk

Maryann Gaug, for VWRs and replacement of bridge on South Willow Creek

Dian Wilson, first distribution from the Alan D. and Dian H. Wilson Endowment for Wilderness, deposited directly to The Summit Foundation

Members of the Lord of the Mountain church (from their May giving)

Corporate donations

Alpine Bank; Arapahoe Basin; Kroger; Velocity Biogroup; West, Huntley Gregory law firm; Wild Nature Media

Corporate matches to member donations

Caterpillar, Shell Oil

WINNING PHOTOS FEATURED IN ESWA NOTECARDS – AVAILABLE NOW!



Ellen Miller (runner up), Eagles Nest Wilderness

Just in time for the holidays, purchase ESWA's lovely notecards featuring FOUR winning photos from this year's contest.

Notecards make great gifts, and support ESWA's mission! A box of 12 cards with envelopes is just \$25 (postage included). Email store@eaglesummitwilderness.org. Speaking of giving, ESWA member-donors joining or renewing at the \$250 level and above receive a complementary box of the 2023 notecards.

And since we're on the topic of gifts, ESWA also has lots of lovely items with our logo, including T-shirts, ball caps, and knit cuffed beanies for sale, as well as adorable stuffed llamas and cozy fleece vests. We also have some of our 2022 series of photo notecards available, as well as single notecards from various years. More swag photos will be available on the ESWA website soon.



SUMMARY OF KEY ESWA ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2023

Wow! ESWA had a remarkable year working to preserve our four Wilderness Areas. Thanks to everyone for their work, which included:

New Volunteer Wilderness Rangers: ESWA trained 29 new Volunteer Wilderness Rangers over two six-hour training sessions on June 3 and June 10. The new VWRs also each completed at least one mentor hike with an experienced ESWA VWR.

VWR Patrols: 97 different ESWA VWRs:

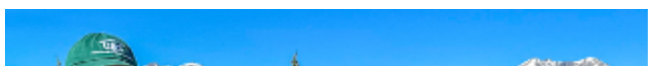
performed 348 unique patrols (441 total counting Co-Rangers) on our Wilderness trails over 2,123 hours

hiked 2,738 miles on those patrols

encountered 10,916 Wilderness users and had substantive conversations with 6,142 of them

had 166 fire-safety conversations with Wilderness users

encountered 1,120 dogs on leash and had conversations with the owners of 438 dogs off leash (72% on leash)





VWR Trailhead Hosts: 26 different ESWA Trailhead Hosts completed:
99 hours of hosting at 7 different Wilderness trailheads:
greeted 1,983 trail users and had substantive discussions with 1,133 of them
held 15 fire-safety conversations



Llama Trips: With support from our USFS colleagues, ESWA volunteers completed four llama work trips into the deeper regions of our Wilderness Areas to remove and restore illegal fire pits, collect and pack out garbage, clear and improve trails, and erect “no fire” signs in some locations. We removed over 150 illegal fire rings, hauled out pounds of trash, cut back thousands of willows and branches encroaching on the trails, built or re-established dozens of rock bars and drainage berms, and removed more than 125 fallen trees blocking trails. The two llamas rented by ESWA also were used by the USFS and RMYC on their own work projects.





Sawyers: In June, Anne Dal Vera and ESWA leaders trained 5 new Class B-Buckers and re-certified 2 Class B-Buckers. In agreement with the USFS, ESWA maintained 10 trails in Summit County and 6 trails in Eagle County during the Summer of 2023 with the following statistics:

41 separate Sawyer outings

513 trees cleared with 706 volunteer hours

Trail Work: Trail improvement work by ESWA volunteers, in addition to trail work on the above-described llama trips, included:

helping complete the new Surprise Lake trail re-route

two workdays on the Deluge Lake trail, ESWA's Adopt-a-Trail

funding, and planning reconstruction in 2024, of the South Willow Creek bridge, in consultation with the USFS.

submitting a grant request to CPW for \$80,000 to repair the initial trail between the Frisco Meadow Creek trailhead and the Lily Pad Lake turn off, and repair a collapsed bridge 3 miles above the trailhead. This is part of a 10-year project called Wilderness Gateways that was planned in 2023 to improve heavily used Wilderness Trails accessed off I-70.

Weeds: ESWA hosted or participated in three weed pull outings. ESWA obtained a grant from NFF for \$30,000 to fund a commercial weed sprayer to spray noxious weeds in or near our Wilderness Areas under the supervision of Steve Elzinga. ESWA volunteers also identified and cleared 2 new weed infestations.

Solitude Monitoring: ESWA members assisted the Eagles Nest/Holy Cross Ranger District with their official solitude monitoring data collection on the Missouri Lakes and Half Moon Pass Wilderness Trails. ESWA members performed 15 of the 20 data collection hikes required under the USFS protocols.

Publications: Each week ESWA published in the Summit Daily an article to help educate the public on Wilderness, wildlife, LNT, and other issues. ESWA also wrote articles published in the Vail Daily in conjunction with the Walking Mountains Science Center. ESWA sent a monthly e-newsletter on Wilderness issues and ESWA activities to over 500 people.

Wild And Scenic Film Festival: In partnership with A-Basin, ESWA organized and managed a Wild and Scenic Film Festival on February 11 at the Riverwalk Event Center in Breckenridge to show the public educational and inspirational independent films promoting outdoor ethics, volunteering, and wildlife protection. Approximately 200 people attended. Corporate sponsorships, ticket sales, and an auction netted \$12,000 for ESWA's mission. And we've begun planning the next Wild and Scenic Film Festival – March 2, 2024!



Photo courtesy of Richard Seeley

Advocating for Wilderness:

ESWA advocated for causes that protect our Wilderness Areas and wildlife. Thanks to everyone who reached out to the Town of Vail Council and Eagle County Commissioners in support of preserving our Bighorn Sheep herd's winter habitat. To support the purchase of the parcel from Vail Resorts, ESWA donated \$1000 and joined with many citizens and other organizations to show public support. Council heard us, and voted to preserve the Bighorns' winter home!

WILD & SCENIC FILM FESTIVAL - SAVE THE DATE MARCH 2, 2024!

Join us at the Riverwalk Center in Breck when ESWA and A-Basin host their second annual Wild & Scenic Film Festival. This is a spectacular event and a major fundraiser for Wilderness. Here's a [link](#) to this year's trailer.



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:

Go to the Community Rewards page on the King Sooper's website: <https://www.kingsoopers.com/i/community/community-rewards>.

Click "Enroll Now."

If you already have an online account, sign in using your email and password and skip to step 6.

If you don't have an account, click "Create Account" at the bottom of the page.

Enter the requested information and click "Create Account."

Under "Find an Organization" search for Eagle Summit Wilderness Alliance.

Click Enroll.

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