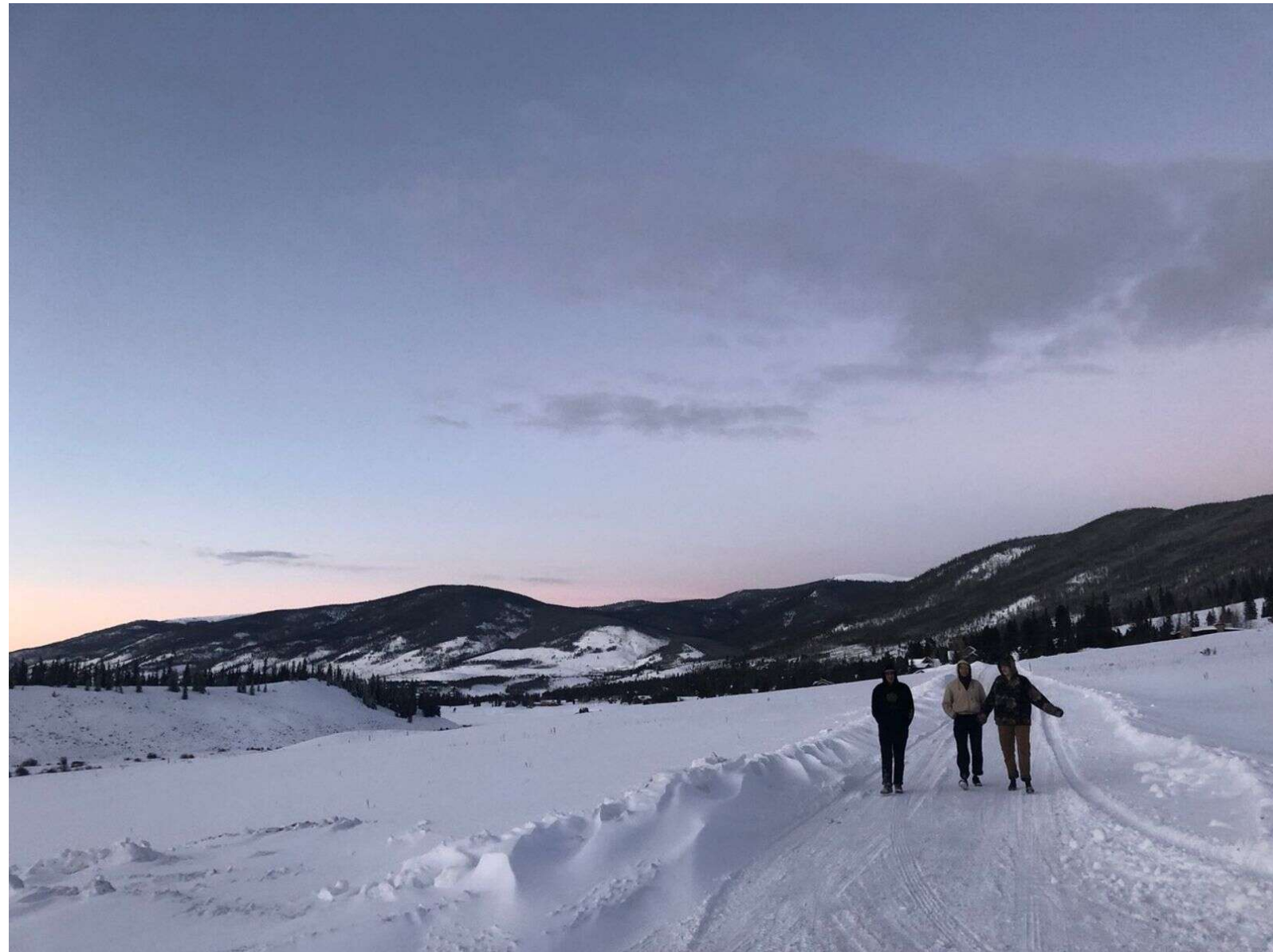


# Get Wild: Creating connection with nature to combat climate change

Columns [FOLLOW COLUMNS](#) | January 14, 2022

**Kaylin Lilly**  
**Get Wild**



People walk on a snow-covered trail in Keystone last week.

*Kaylin Lilly/Courtesy photo*

When we are constantly barraged by news of natural disasters caused by climate change, despair is a natural reaction.

Last month's wildfires in Boulder County, drought and extreme weather are climate change at our front door. These disasters can create despair and hopelessness, which can lead to feeling paralyzed and to inactivity. We need to reconnect daily to nature to remind ourselves why nature is worth protecting and gain the inspiration to make us proactive in protecting the natural world.

While the climate crisis is extremely daunting, we know that the fear and hopelessness in our world is the exact opposite of what we need. Older environmental groups have been criticized for resorting to fearful data and statistics to try to initiate climate solutions. This same approach to climate change created a lot of destruction of our planet in the first place.



The inability to control the ever-changing dynamics of the Earth have motivated more destruction because of our natural reactions to nature's unknowns. For example, the widespread use of chemical pollutants for food production or our need to provide a molded, landscaped and perfect version of nature that feels safer and less out of our control.

When we are scared of nature's capabilities, especially with climate change, we are more likely to avoid connecting with nature, which leads to more destruction. We are part of nature; however, as climate disasters increase, we may view nature as separate from ourselves even more so. What if we used this heart-wrenching information as a source of inspiration to deal with climate change?

How do we create a different perspective and connection with the natural world? Simply spend time deeply befriending nature, not as a human doing but a human being. We are part of Mother Nature's shifts and unknowns. By creating a personal connection with the Earth, we can approach the unknowns with more strength, humility and acceptance. With more acceptance, we can take a stance of hope for a healing world and be less likely to run away from the hardships of our world.

Developing a connection to nature is one of the best ways to not only cope with climate change but also to find purpose for positive climate action.

Get outside every day and take a mindful ski, hike or walk to observe something in nature that feels like it reflects a part of yourself. For example, maybe you look out at Buffalo Mountain and see the way it reflects your strength, resiliency and shining structure. Maybe on your walk you find deep gratitude for the smallest of things you might not have noticed before. It might inspire you to move into your life with more acceptance and gratitude for the way nature naturally creates a world of beauty and destruction.

This destruction in our world opens the door for new life just in the way that our world's current standing is an invitation for us to live a better, more reciprocal life with nature. Notice your exhale breath that enables a tree to take in carbon while the tree's exhale gives us oxygen. Take in the simple treasures like the glistening snow and bluebird skies. Appreciate the Steller's jay's ability to survive in a Summit County winter.

Let these practices inspire you to shift the way you live and what you support. This mindfulness can provide us with a deeper connection to where we live with more hope and positive action for the future.



Kaylin Lilly

“Get Wild” publishes on Fridays in the Summit Daily News. Kaylin Lilly is a member of Eagle Summit Wilderness Alliance, an all-volunteer nonprofit that helps the U.S. Forest Service protect and preserve the wilderness areas in Eagle and Summit counties. For more information, visit [EagleSummitWilderness.org](https://EagleSummitWilderness.org).

