

FRIENDS OF EAGLES NEST WILDERNESS

soon to be

EAGLE SUMMIT WILDERNESS ALLIANCE



Fall-Winter 2019-20



Engelmann asters by Dave Owens

Newsletter

Friends of Eagles Nest Wilderness

Bill Betz, Chair

Dear Members, Volunteers, and Friends of FENW,

As we stand on the threshold of our second quarter-century, we look back on a wonderful year - our last as FENW - and ahead to exciting new challenges as ESWA. Importantly, for COLORADO GIVES DAY, you can still find us as FENW: cogives.org/FriendsEaglesNestWilderness, and our website address will remain www.fenw.org for a while longer.



Bill Betz

With our new name - *Eagle Summit Wilderness Alliance* - comes a new logo (below), created by the folks at Kind Design, who generously discounted their work for us.

Inside, read about our busy year. Before Mike Beach left for a new USFS position in Idaho, he wrote the second installment on the Qualities of Wilderness (p. 6). He and Cindy Ebbert give updates on the USFS work this year (p. 4). With Mike's departure, Katherine Bazan joins Cindy as our new USFS liaison (p. 3). Ken Harper & Mike Mayrer review the work of our signature Volunteer Wilderness Ranger program (p. 3). Tim Drescher describes the overnight work trips that he led (p.7). Jim Alexander celebrates the rebirth of our noxious weed mitigation program, which he is leading (pp. 5&7). Dan Siebert gives an update on our first-ever Photo Contest (pp. 6&8).

All of this support for Wilderness is made possible by **your support**, for which we express our enduring thanks. None of it would happen without you.

We have recently taken on a big project: the building of a \$40,000 boardwalk across a swampy area on the popular Mesa Cortina trail. The enterprise has been jump-started by the family and friends of the late Beau Schuette, who have donated or pledged more than \$16,000 to the task. In addition, we recently submitted a grant application for \$10,000 to help fund it. There's still a long way to go. Please consider contributing to this important project.

In addition, our Endowment Fund is nearing the \$50,000 threshold that we must reach before we can tap the income from the fund. Please consider helping us find those last few hundred dollars to push the fund over the top.

These donations, plus member dues and donations to our operating budget, can all be made in one easy stop - www.cogives.org/FriendsEaglesNestWilderness

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DONATE AT: cogives.org/FriendsEaglesNestWilderness

Colorado Gives Day is Dec. 10

Give ANY TIME before then at the URL above, and THANKS!



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Mike Mayrer, VWRs east

Jim Alexander, Noxious weeds

Dave Owens, Proofing, Gifts/swag

Dave Brewster, Trail trips 2020

Joan Betz, Manual revision

Kim Fenske, Trails daytrips

Ellie Finlay, VWR of 2019



Mountain wave clouds.
Paul Winters

FINANCES

We see our financial future with 2020 foresight. Our cash balance is strong, at \$21,000 unencumbered.

Donations and pledges to the Beau Schuette memorial Boardwalk total more than \$16,000. We have one pending grant application for \$10,000 (for Beau's Boardwalk). Our Endowment Fund is close to \$50,000, and we hope to tap into its earnings in the coming years.

About half of the endowment is for a further memorial for Beau. The annual income - about \$1,500 - might be used to honor an outstanding member of a Rocky Mountain Youth Corps team.

Our Noxious Weed Mitigation program received an award for more than \$15,000 from the National Forest Foundation (see p. 6); we plan to seek additional funding in 2020 for this important work.

THANKS TO OUR MEMBER-DONORS!

Our deep appreciation to those individuals who have donated in the past year

Bill & Marylee Adamson, Doug Alexander, Bob & Mary Beth Bagg, Kurtis Barry, Charlene Beckner, Bill & Joan Betz, Joel & Mern Bitler, Holly Brassington, Tom Brennom, Jay Browne, Susan Carlson, Sharon & Thomas Copper, Currie Craven, Milan Doshi, Eleanor Finlay, Tom & Sally Fry, Karole & Jim Fuller, Maryann Gaug, Bill & Susy Gillilan, Suzanne Greene, Frank & Mary Gutmann, Linda Hrycaj, Margaret F. Johnson, Lee & Jessica Johnson, Jeff Leigh, Sally Lice, Cindy & Tom Lillard, Sally Liu, Ken Loveday, Tamara McClelland, Jennifer & Jeff Miles, Michael & Karen Miller, Augusta Molnar, Kurt Morscher, The Nices, Tom & Carol Oster, David Owens, Adam & Anne Poe, Dave & Marilyn Raymond, Phil & Gail Reeves, George & Kathryn Resseguie, Lee Rimel, Steve & Laura Rossetter, Barbara & John Schuette, Julie Shapiro & Sam Massman, Jan Shipman, Marty & Maxine Solomon, Pat Spitzmiller, Sue Sprague, Erin & Edmund Tatar, Linda Tatem, Pat Taylor, Don & Constance Tebbs, Megan & James Testin, Alexis Wagner, Grace Wellewert



Our Annual Meeting, **WILDERFEST**, held in Frisco's historic park, celebrated our 25th anniversary, and featured Dillon District Ranger **BILL JACKSON** (left), who reviewed our quarter-century partnership.

Other speakers included (l. to r.) Chris Turner, Mike Browning, Maryann Gaug, Ken Harper, Bill Betz, and Mike Browning.

A complimentary picnic lunch and silent auction made for a festive afternoon.



Stained glass artist **GAIL SHEARS** presents the First Annual Currie Craven Award for Wilderness Stewardship to FENW co-founder and longtime President **CURRIE CRAVEN**

VOLUNTEER WILDERNESS RANGERS

Ken Harper writes: The summer of 2019 was a great season for the ESWA Volunteer Ranger program. Once again we went out on over 300 patrols, hiked over 2000 miles and talked to over 13,000 public hikers, of whom about 1000 were backpackers in 380 different groups. Of the 1300 dogs we encountered, about 1/3 were off leash. We counted 3200 vehicles at trailheads. Our VWR-of-the-year is **Ellie Finlay**, who covered 262 miles on her 35 ranger hikes. On one June trip, she counted 300 trees across the trail. **Melissa Wills** and I encountered the most hikers on one trip: 292 on Booth Creek. **Brad Benz** found 43 illegal campfire rings on one five-hour patrol. **Sally Martin** counted 117 cars at the Fall Creek trailhead one day. We estimate that we encounter fewer than 10% of the total hikers in the Wilderness, so you can appreciate the overall impact on our fragile ecosystems.



When talking to the public, we receive overwhelming appreciation for our volunteer efforts. Many hikers comment on how nice it is to see so many rangers patrolling the wilderness trails.

Our volunteer rangers also did a lot of work helping maintain trails and cleaning up illegal campsites. It was an especially busy year due to all the avalanche debris from so many avalanches last winter. Feedback from the public was again positive on the improved condition of trails in the wilderness.

One of the programs that ESWA funds is the renting of two llamas for the Forest Service trail crews to use all summer (see p. 7). This allows the trail crews to carry more gear on their work days and overnight trips. The volunteer rangers also benefit when they go on these work trips with much lighter packs. We hope to add another llama to our little herd next summer.

The volunteer rangers were also involved in ESWA's reinvigorated invasive weed program by acting as weed spotters (see p. 5). With more people looking for invasive weeds, we make it much easier for the Forest Service to send out crews to eradicate the weed patches. The volunteers also participated in weed pulling sessions and can get rid of a lot of weeds in a short amount of time.

The ESWA Volunteer Ranger program is already looking forward to next summer when we can patrol and maintain even more miles and get rid of more pesky weeds. If you or anyone would like to join us, please email us: info@fenw.org.



Mike Mayrer writes: Why be a Volunteer Wilderness Ranger (VWR)? After reviewing past applications, the number-one reason given was for the volunteer to be able both to assist and to provide useful information to the many Wilderness visitors whom we encounter in both Eagle and Summit Counties.

A close second is after many years of personally enjoying our national forest and parks, they would like the opportunity to "give back" to help maintain the forest for others to enjoy. We are the forest ranger that our visitors hope to see on the trail.

Stay dedicated and keep volunteering.

Hi everyone, my name is **Katherine Bazan** and I will be the interim point of contact for all things trails and wilderness for the Eagle/Holy Cross Ranger District until we officially fill Mike Beach's vacant position. I hail from the Adirondack Mountains of Northern New York, where my love for Wilderness began, as well as my career as a trail worker. I was called out to the Rocky Mountains to be a ski bum in 2012 and got lucky enough to land a job at the Eagle/Holy Cross Ranger District in the summer of 2013 doing trail work in our three beautiful wilderness areas. I have worked seasonally since then doing trails and wilderness work on the EHX district in the summer and ski patrolling at Beaver Creek resort in the winters. I became full time this September as the districts Trails and Wilderness lead and couldn't be more excited to continue working with the program and with our partners. These days during my free time you can find me hiking around on a trail somewhere with my 7 month old son Keller or hopefully sneaking in some turns up on one of the mountains!



Katherine & son Keller

Our USFS liaison for Eagle/Holy Cross, **Mike Beach** accepted a position in Idaho (McCall RD, Payette NF). He'll be responsible for trails, Off-Highway-Vehicles (OHVs), developed & dispersed recreation, ski areas, special uses, and the Payette Avalanche Center. Whew!

We sent him off with a John Fielder photo (Gore Creek head-wall), which was made possible through John's great generosity. THANKS, JOHN!



The inscription says, "From all your friends at Eagle Summit Wilderness Alliance"

For two decades, A-Basin staff have donated generously to their **Employee Environmental Fund**.



We have been a steady beneficiary of their beneficence.

Our enduring
THANKS!

Meet **Ellie Finlay**, our Volunteer Ranger of the Year. By Ken Harper

Ellie came to the Vail Valley in 1973 to work as a nurse at the Vail Clinic. The clinic didn't become a hospital until 1980. She said the clinic was very small when she first started there. They had only 5 patient beds. In 1979 she began to work as a nurse with Dr John Gottlieb, orthopedic surgeon. She said that was her most rewarding work.

Ellie is now retired and spends most of her time in the great outdoors. This summer, as a volunteer ranger, she got in 31 ranger patrols and hiked over 240 miles. She also signed up to be a Weed Spotter and monitor invasive weeds on the trails she hikes. Fortunately for her, some of the larger weed patches ESWA is monitoring and helping to eradicate happen to be on her favorite trails, East Lake Creek and Dead Dog.

Ellie has enjoyed public lands all her life and now that she is retired she is able to pay back by being a volunteer ranger. Her favorite part of volunteering is being able to teach the public how to take care of the Wilderness. She says that most of the people she meets do not know about wilderness ethics and Leave No Trace.

When Ellie was in middle school, she had to take an aptitude test to determine what career she was best suited for. Her guidance counselor was quite upset with her as the results said she should be a firefighter or a forest ranger. Neither career was available to women at that time. As soon as she arrived in Vail, she became a volunteer firefighter and now she is a volunteer forest ranger. Her middle school aspirations have finally been fulfilled.



REPORTS FROM OUR USFS LIAISONS

Mike Beach writes: Despite late-spring snow, the 2019 season was another successful one on the Eagle-Holy Cross Ranger District. A five-person trail crew and three-person Wilderness crew tackled all sorts



of projects both inside and outside of Wilderness. Inside of Wilderness, the crews cut 1,631 trees, including a record 494 trees alone on the Missouri Lakes trail, which experienced a massive avalanche almost a half-mile wide. Other notable projects included rebuilding a bridge on the Fancy Lake trail, working with FENW to remove more than 40 illegal fire rings at Gore Lake, constructing a reroute on the bottom of Pitkin Creek trail, and building cairns to direct hikers to the top of Mount of the Holy Cross.



Cindy Ebbert writes: Greetings from the Eagles Nest Wilderness (Summit County side) and the Ptarmigan Peak Wilderness!

The USFS Wilderness program on the Dillon Ranger District had another successful summer with Abby Seymour returning as the Lead Wilderness Ranger and Kelley Dearing joining us as a new ranger. We started the season with clearing trails of downed trees and by the end of the season we had 98% of the trails cleared! Abby oversaw the volunteer crosscut sawyer program which involved training, mentoring, and coordinating work days. Our 6 volunteer sawyers contributed 225 hours and cleared 565 trees. In addition, a Rocky Mountain Youth Corps crew was hired for 2 weeks to backpack into more remote locations to clear the trails. The USFS rangers, volunteer sawyers, and RMYC crew cleared 1,865 trees in total!

The USFS Wilderness Rangers spend their summer either day-hiking or backpacking into the wilderness in order to perform trail maintenance, to clear trails with crosscut saws, to educate visitors about *Leave No Trace*, to clean campsites, pack out trash, install signs, monitor trail counters, and inspect outfitter camps. It was great to partner with FENW on a couple of trail projects this summer which included a backpack to Upper Cataract Lake along with starting the construction of a new footbridge on the Lily Pad Lake Trail. And we continue to be impressed by FENW's ability to recruit, train and field volunteer rangers every year who are truly the "friendly face of the Forest Service". A huge thanks from the Forest Service for all that FENW does to coordinate trail projects, the volunteer ranger program, and the noxious weed program!

"To be whole. To be complete. Wilderness reminds us what it means to be human, what we are connected to rather than what we are sepa-



THANKS TO OUR BUSINESS DONORS & SPONSORS

A-BASIN, the legend, has been our major donor for two decades; **ELITE THERAPEUTICS**, whose soothing anti-aging creams that are of special use in our intense, high altitude sunshine provides indispensable printing services; the **OGILVY** family, owners of Jay's Hut above Vail Pass, donated its use for our VWR party. **RESTOP**, the leader in personal sanitation and hygiene in the backcountry, donated 250 wag bags, which we judiciously hand out to backpackers. **ABBEY'S COFFEE** got our early morning work crews juiced, while **WHOLE FOODS** Frisco provided the tasty carbs.

THANKS TO THE DONORS TO THE WILDERFEST SILENT AUCTION

TARGET provided a generous gift card; **MARYANN GAUG** provided several copies of her famous hiking guides; **REI** donated an ultralight daypack; **ELITE THERAPEUTICS** gave a cornucopia of their skin-care products; **KIM FENSKE** donated more than a dozen of his popular hiking guides; **EPIC Mountain Express** generously furnished a round trip to DIA coupon; **Bakers Brewery** gave beer and a gift card; **RED BUFFALO** conveyed coffee, a hat, and a mug; **THE CLUB HOUSE** in Frisco donated an hour on their golf simulator

Jim Alexander writes: Weed Spotters hit the trails (and beyond)

Can you tell which thistles are native and which are invasive noxious thistles? If you see a noxious weed, do you know if you should pull it out of the ground to prevent its spread? Do you know how to report invasive noxious weed locations? Or, do you even know why noxious weeds are bad for the forest? More than a dozen volunteers who formed the new Weed Spotter program this past summer learned all of that, and more.

The Weed Spotters are FENW/ESWA volunteers (as well as from FDRD and the Sierra Club) who have become 'weed aware' – they are familiar with the noxious weeds that threaten our wilderness areas. Our Weed Spotters identify some of the worst weed species, know why they are bad for the ecosystem, and understand how each should be treated and reported to the USFS. Each member of this intrepid little group still does their normal hiking but keeps an eye out for invasive weeds. When they find weeds, they note the location and report them to Jim Alexander, who is building a database to guide the USFS annual treatment program.

The creation of this new team is one benefit that came from the over \$15,000 FENW received from the National Forest Foundation (NFF) in April. The grant provided funds for professional treatment of four severely weed infested areas in or near our three Wilderness areas. The program also included a volunteer weed pull in July, when 15 people spent a morning learning to identify Musk and Bull Thistle, and then pull them (and NOT pull the native thistle).

The treatment efforts continue past FENW efforts to control noxious weed infestations, but the newest part of the program is the Weed Spotters. For the treatment program to be successful, we must find and report exact locations and sizes of weed infestations. It is also critical that we monitor and prove that our treatment programs are effective year over year.

This year was a good start. Our team identified four distinct new populations of Dalmatian Toadflax, Oxeye Daisy, Musk Thistle, and Canadian Thistle in or near the Wilderness areas. Also, some members of the team took part in "Adopt an Infestation" where they committed to hike the areas treated for the NFF grant to confirm the size and effectiveness of this year's treatment.

In 2020, we expect to double the size of the treatment program. The next NFF grant application is due in December. The new larger grant will require matching funds and volunteer time. If plant identification is your thing, considering joining us in one or more Weed Spotter Events. We're still working on dates for the following events:

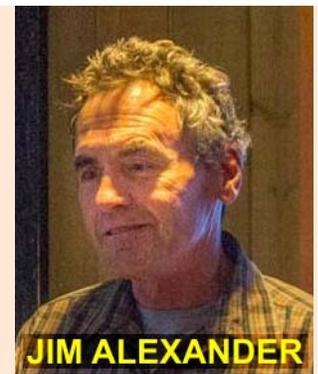
Planning meeting in March

Visit to the Denver Botanic Gardens and/or Vail's Betty Ford Botanic Gardens in April

Weed identification walk in June

Weed pull in July

There may also be other impromptu events along the way. Please contact Jim Alexander for more information or ongoing status (720 238 5444; jimofcolorado@gmail.com).





The winner! MARIA LEECH won first place in our photo contest with this view of Red Buffalo Pass (left) and Red Peak (center), taken from Buffalo Mountain. Maria was a USFS intern in 2018.



ADVOCACY

We advocate for several local campaigns. The information is greater than we can accommodate here, so we will be sending a SPECIAL eNewsletter shortly that provides a more thorough update. Here are some brief summaries:

The CORE Act. The U.S House of Representatives passed this a short time ago. It will protect 400,000 acres of wilderness and wildlife habitat across Colorado. A key to Senate passage is held by Senator Gardner. Call him at 202 224 5941 and urge him to support it.

Summit County Safe Passages. The plan to construct three I-70 wildlife crossings on Vail Pass is gaining momentum.

Buck Berlaimont. A Florida company is proposing a luxury development on a 680 acre inholding inside the WRNF above Edwards. The proposed paving of a five mile Forest Service road will interfere significantly with game migration, and the populations of mule deer (especially) and elk are already plummeting.

Protecting the Lower Blue River Valley. An open-pit gravel quarry has been proposed for the unsullied Lower Blue River Valley. The mine might interfere with wildlife travel & migration routes.

Rename the Gore Range. During his two year hunting trip in the West, this Irish nobleman slaughtered game recklessly, depriving native Utes of their food supply. We eagerly await the Ute tribe's support of our renaming campaign. The NUCHE Range is one candidate - it means "Ute" in the Ute language.

QUALITIES OF WILDERNESS CHARACTER

By Mike Beach, USFS

The five terms that define wilderness are known as Qualities of Wilderness Character. They are: *Untrammelled, Natural, Undeveloped, Solitude and Primitive/Unconfined Recreation, and Other Features of Value (e.g., cultural, historic)*. As wilderness stewards, we are required by law to sustain each of these qualities to the best of our ability and in balance with one another. In the last Newsletter (www.fenw.org/img/archive/newsletter_190401.pdf), I described the first two Qualities; here, I'll touch on the third and fourth: *Undeveloped* and *Solitude & Primitive/Unconfined Recreation*.

The *Undeveloped* quality is perhaps the most-easily understood of the five. The Wilderness Act (1964) states that a Wilderness is "an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation...." A Wilderness area that is undeveloped is likely to make the visitor feel like they have escaped from modern civilization and are essentially "in the wild." We try to improve the undeveloped quality whenever possible. On the Dillon Ranger District in 2015, a Colorado Correctional Institute crew assisted the district's Wilderness program in removing a large concrete structure near the Boss Mine in the North Rock Creek drainage using non-motorized and non-mechanized means. The structure and out-buildings were found not to be historic by the Historic Preservation Office.

Wilderness areas are also meant to provide "outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation," the fourth quality of Wilderness character. Whereas the undeveloped quality is relatively easy to understand, this quality can cause confusion. While solitude can mean different things to different people, there are relatively straightforward guidelines that we aim to meet in Wilderness. The metrics that we use are "groups encountered" (i.e., how many groups of people you see on a hike) and "campsites encountered" (i.e., how many other occupied campsites you see from your campsite). In recreation research, both of these metrics have been shown to impact a person's sense of solitude. We have several options, some less palatable than others, to protect opportunities for solitude – de-publicizing places, encouraging use elsewhere, maintaining trails to lower standards, quota systems, etc. Each of these can have negative impacts so, as Wilderness managers, we don't implement them without lots of thought and, many times, public input.

The concept of primitive and unconfined recreation includes the use of primitive skills, and opportunities for self-reliance and personal challenge. It also includes limiting, to the extent possible, management restrictions within Wilderness (which can "confine" visitors' experiences). Certain restrictions, such as prohibiting campfires above 11,000 feet due to a lack of dead/downed wood, have become essential to protect the fragile alpine ecosystem. Others, such as requiring pets to be on leash, are not always so clear cut. In the Eagles Nest and Ptarmigan Peak Wilderness areas, pets are required to be on leash because data collected over the years have helped us determine that pets off leash have been significantly negatively impacting wildlife and other's experiences. In the Holy Cross Wilderness, there is no leash law because the impact from pets, on the whole, has not yet been great enough to warrant a regulation. (It should be noted that pets are always required to be under verbal control within Wilderness and a leash is a really good idea!) Considering these issues, and striking an appropriate balance that meets the intent of the Wilderness Act and preserves wilderness character is one of the key aspects of our jobs as wilderness managers. Thanks for reading!



OVERNIGHT TRAIL & CAMPSITE WORK TRIPS

Tim Drescher writes: This summer I had the pleasure of leading two separate, three day, two night stewardship trips into Eagles Nest Wilderness. Scoping trips identified Slate Lakes and Gore Lake as prime candidates for our presence, along with our llama companions, Powell and Dominguez. The llamas have been immensely popular - hikers find much amusement when they see Powell and Dom out doing their work. This is a program that ESWA looks to continue, and hopefully even expand into the future!

This winter's incredible snowpack put us in a tough position. Slate Lakes was our originally targeted destination, but due to a dangerous water crossing and snow levels we decided to move our work location to an area that needed just as much of our attention: **Upper Cataract Lake**. We arrived to the lake with plenty of people and snow lining the lake. Thankfully the large group campsite was empty, and we made camp surrounded by snow and mosquitos.

The following day we went straight to Cat lake, which lies directly below Upper Cataract Lake. From there we began our day of destroying 27 illegal fire rings, naturalizing 9 illegal campsites and clearing 23 deadfall trees across the trail. Three of us had our first taste of using a crosscut saw under the expert guidance of Abby from the Forest Service.

Our second trip of the summer was to **Gore Lake**. The trailhead was busy with campers, hikers and road bikers screaming down the hill from Vail Pass. The first mile of this trail sometimes proves to be popular, so it came as no surprise when people began stopping our uphill momentum to ask about the llamas and take selfies with them. We're always happy to oblige, answer questions and state our mission. A couple of us also took the time to do some "lopping" to clear vegetation around the trail corridor on our hike up.

When we arrived at Gore Lake, we were again pleasantly surprised to discover another great campsite unoccupied for our large group of people and llamas. We had heard rumors of a big group of mountain goats, and they sure showed up in numbers the second day; it was amusing to see how the llamas reacted - they paid barely any attention!

Our Saturday was spent inventorying and rehabbing 40 campsites and 42 fire rings. We also erected a brand new "No Campfires" sign right off the trail near the entrance to the grand view of the lake. As always, much discussion and education was had with the campers who happened to be at the lake that weekend. As clouds and lightning came in that evening we were treated to some unbelievable colors and a double rainbow that extended above Gore Lake.



Tim Drescher, Dom the llama and Mike Browning

Next summer DAVE BREWSTER and I will be leading FOUR overnight work trips into the Wilderness. Overall our trips are fun, good people always show up and I typically bring beer and delicious snacks. If you're interested in hard but rewarding work in our beautiful Wilderness, please contact me at timdcy@gmail.com to learn more or to sign up for our trips next summer!



What are bad Weeds?

Jim Alexander writes: Invasive, noxious weeds tend to take over from natural native plants - and generally remove the land they stand on from the space animals need to forage and eat. Overall descriptions of the 36 plants that are endangering Summit and Eagle Counties can be found on the Weed Spotters Web Site (weedspotters.org).

Our 2019 treatment program covered infestations on or near Acorn Creek, Harrigan Creek, Martin Creek, West Lake Creek and Piney Lakes trails. If you want to take a look (next summer, that is) to see the shocking effects of weeds, here are two hikes (both were treated this past year, but surely aren't eradicated):

* Martin Creek, just south of Minturn - you will see weeds even as you drive to the parking lot. The two yards on either side are filled with False Chamomile. As you step out of the car and start up the trail, there is Oxeye Daisy, Dalmatian Toadflax and Canada Thistle. The shocking part is about a quarter mile in. There is a pretty little valley completely covered by Musk Thistle and beyond the Musk Thistle, row after row of Common Mullen standing like Wellington's Army facing Napoleon at Waterloo. The Musk Thistle continue up the trail for nearly a mile - covering nearly 40 acres of National Forest Land!

*Harrigan Creek, North of Silverthorne - the Musk Thistle can first be found just as you cross a stream at 39.76, -106.15 - look up the trail on a hillside to the right. This fall, there were 6-foot-high thistles nestled into the forest. Further up the trail, the meadow spreads wide but if you leave the trail and walk to the creek, Canada Thistle is so pervasive that countless weeds will prick your legs all along the way. That's not the shocking part. When the trail turns to the left to cross a second meadow and enter the forest, leave the trail and head for this spot (39.75, -106.17) - there you'll find four acres of Musk Thistle so thick you can't walk between the stalks!



Dan Siebert writes: We hosted a photo contest for members at the Wilderfest annual meeting on 8/18/19 in Frisco. We received more than 20 beautiful submissions of areas in Eagles Nest, Ptarmigan Peak and Holy Cross Wilderness. **MARIA LEECH** won first place for her submission (see page 6). Submissions ranged from mountain vistas and wildflowers to people enjoying the wilderness. They were all a great reminder of why we volunteer our time and effort in advocating for these special places. Do you have a photo of these areas but missed the competition? Please don't hesitate to send them to us; you might even get featured on our website and social media channels.

A big thank you to **Elite Therapeutics** for their generous assistance in printing this newsletter. Elite offers a variety of physician-developed skin products - anti-aging, cancer care, and more.

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DONATE through Colorado Gives - it is quick and easy. By default, your donation will go to our general operating budget. OR... you can target your gift in the Comments Section to

1. BEAU SCHUETTE MEMORIAL BOARDWALK

In 2017, Beau Schuette (35) died from an undiagnosed heart problem. His family and friends, working with us and the Forest Service, have created a project in his honor: a boardwalk across a swampy part of the popular **Mesa Cortina trail** that Beau loved hiking (like the existing one on Lilypad). More than \$16,000 have been raised towards the estimated \$40,000 cost. Help us reach that goal with your donations.



2. FENW/ESWA ENDOWMENT FUND - our Endowment Fund is above \$49,000, and when it surpasses \$50K we can begin to tap the income for Wilderness projects. Please help us bump up the fund to fifty thousand dollars.

www.fenw.org/



EAGLE SUMMIT WILDERNESS ALLIANCE

SOON TO BE

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