

EAGLE POST 14

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EAGLE POST - The newsletter of **Friends of Eagles Nest Wilderness**, apprising you of important activities in and around Eagles Nest, Holy Cross, and Ptarmigan Wilderness Areas.



Greetings!

Our **topic this month**: *Meet MIKE BEACH Wilderness Manager, White River NF*

Introduction: FENW is fortunate to have the guidance and collaboration of **TWO** Wilderness Managers from the White River National Forest (WRNF): **Cindy Ebbert** (see [December Newsletter](#)) and the subject of this month's Newsletter, **Mike Beach**.

Why two Wilderness Managers? It's because Eagles Nest Wilderness (ENW) is cleaved down the middle by the boundary between two different WRNF Districts - Dillon Ranger District (DRD) on the east, and Eagle-Holy Cross R.D. on the west. (In the early-2000s, the Holy Cross R.D. was combined with its western neighbor, the Eagle R.D. to form the Eagle-Holy Cross R.D. (EHXRD), with its main office in Minturn. Here "Eagle" refers to Eagle, Colorado, not to Eagles Nest Wilderness.)

So with Cindy in charge of the east side of ENW (and Ptarmigan Peak Wilderness), and Mike in charge of the west side of ENW (and the Holy Cross and Flat Tops Wildernesses), these precious lands - totalling more than a quarter million acres - are in good hands and FENW receives a double dose of USFS expertise. Below, Mike describes his journey to Wilderness Manager.

Meet MIKE BEACH Wilderness Manager for Eagle-Holy Cross RD

Hello! My name is Mike Beach and I have the pleasure of serving as the Wilderness and Trails Manager for the Eagle/Holy Cross Ranger District located in Minturn, Colorado.



Mike Beach

I was born in the windswept northwest corner of Iowa. The cornfield adjacent to my backyard was probably my first taste of "wilderness" though at the age of three, I wasn't quite aware of the concepts of trammeling and development. My family - mom, dad, and two older

FENW is now on
INSTAGRAM



Visit the FENW booth
at the REI Dillon
grand opening
May 5-7

Congratulations! to poet **Erin Robertson** (who wrote [A View From Ute Pass](#) for FENW) on winning a "Voices in the Wilderness" prize for work in Alaska this summer.

DUST OFF THEM BOOTS!

Apply to become a
**Volunteer Wilderness
Ranger**

[Details here.](#)

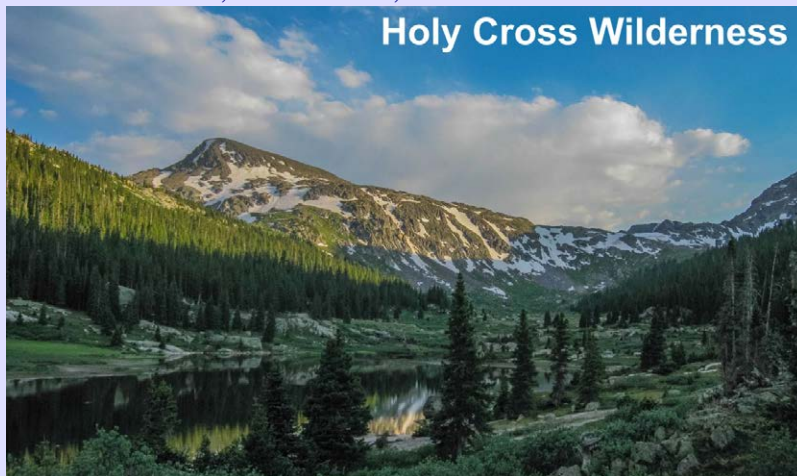
Training day: Sat, 6/3.
In 2016, more than 50
VWRs contacted more

sisters - moved quite a bit as I grew up, first to New York, then Texas, and finally Pennsylvania. Living in these locations over the years allowed me to develop an interesting perspective on our country's lands, people, and cultures... and infected me with a travel bug that I still can't shake!

Summer family vacations to the mountains of Colorado were frequent in my childhood. Trips to the Wet Mountain Valley, and Summit and Eagle counties piqued my interest in the vastness of the wild places I've since learned so well. Our proximity to the Appalachian Mountains and New England while living in Pennsylvania allowed for weekend trips with the family to explore the trails and forests on the Eastern seaboard. It was in these formative years that I began to understand more about the importance of our public lands and the concept of wilderness.

After high school, I traded snow boots for flip flops and attended the University of Florida for my undergraduate degree. During one of many nightly battles with Calculus homework, I decided that, for me, a major in Outdoor Recreation Management would pass the "Could you do this for the rest of your life?" test decidedly better than Engineering. Four short years later, my search for an internship led me to, you guessed it, Minturn, Colorado!

The internship was so much fun that I decided to stick around and work on the Eagle-Holy Cross Ranger District's trails/wilderness crew the next summer, and the next, and the next...!



All told, I spent nine summers as a seasonal employee on wilderness, trails, and timber crews based out of Minturn. In the winters, I worked at local resorts, got a master's degree, worked for a NEPA contractor, and generally just enjoyed the vast recreational opportunities that surround us in these parts. No matter what other ventures I tried, my work with the Forest Service always kept me coming back summer after summer. The opportunity to educate visitors, maintain trails, and do my part to preserve wilderness character in the Eagles Nest, Flat Tops, and Holy Cross Wilderness areas was amazing and every hitch in the woods offered a different challenge and a renewed sense of stewardship.

In October, 2016, I was offered the year-round position of Wilderness

than 12,000 hikers.
Greet & teach!

Volunteer for our **2017 Trail projects:**

- **June 3** - Nat'l Trails Day. Joint day project with FDRD. Location TBD.

- **June 17** - Gateways Day project: damage repair, tree removal, run-off control. Location TBD.

Overnight pack-ins:

- **Thu-Sat, July 27-29:** Location TBD.

Reservations necessary.

- **Thu-Sun, Sept 14-17:** Missouri Lakes, Holy Cross Wilderness Area. Reservations necessary.

Details

In 2016, we spent two weekends at alpine lakes and obliterated **54** illegal campfire rings. Join our crews in 2017!

We also need volunteers **outside the Wilderness**

If you're a **writer, social media advisor, website manager, marketer, event planner, meeter/greeter**, we need you! **contact us**

Make a donation to FENW



Make a difference!

Recent Newsletters

and Trails Manager for the district. What a job! I am able to work with a tremendous group of people and have the pleasure of supervising a fantastic crew of hard-working wilderness rangers and trail crew.



This summer, we'll have thirteen summer employees dedicated to our wilderness and trails. Among other things, the crews will be conducting a comprehensive campsite inventory and solitude monitoring project in the Holy Cross Wilderness. The data collected this summer will enable us to assess trends in biophysical impacts occurring on the ground, as well as social impacts such as perceived crowding. These data will be essential to future stewardship of the Holy Cross Wilderness.

Other work this summer in the Eagles Nest Wilderness includes trail improvements on the ever-popular Booth Lake, Bighorn, and Deluge Lake trails in East Vail, working with Rocky Mountain Youth Corps. These drainages have seen steady increases in use over the years and are in need of stewardship to preserve their character. We'll be improving drainage, restoring social routes, and stabilizing trail treads in attempts to keep users on the trails and prevent degradation of the surrounding landscape. We'll also be contacting many visitors and making sure they're informed on Leave No Trace principles and wilderness ethics.

We're excited about working with FENW and continuing their successful volunteer ranger patrol as well as working on a project at Missouri Lakes and in the Upper Piney area in concert with Colorado Outward Bound School (COBS). FENW will assist our wilderness rangers in conducting campsite inventories and restoration in the Missouri Lakes area. Along the Upper Piney trail, FENW and COBS will collaborate to complete a day of trail work on this popular route. Additionally, we're

- April: "Future of Eagles Nest" by April Phule
- March: "Managing High Use Areas in Wilderness" by Kay Hopkins
- February: "A Cry From The Wilderness" by Bill Reed
- January: "Public Lands at Risk" by David Lien
- December: "My life as a Wilderness Manager" by Cindy Ebbert
- November: "Saving Native Cutthroat Trout" by Matt Grove
- October: "Loved to Death" by Jackie Fortier
- September: "Toward a Natural Forest" by Jim Furnish

Join us! for our next **Planning Meeting**
Thursday, May 25, 5:30 PM, Silverthorne >>

MAP

Details at www.fenw.org/

CITY MARKET COMMUNITY REWARDS PROGRAM

Please **register** your City Market Value Card, linking it to FENW, which will send rebates to FENW without compromising your earned fuel points. Please note that each card holder may only sign up for one tax exempt organization. **THANKS!**



Friends, Friends, Friends!
Check out our sister 'FRIENDS'

- Friends of Dillon Ranger District (**FDRD**)
- Friends of the Lower Blue River (**FOLBR**)



anticipating another productive year for the Eagle County Adopt a Trail program - FENW maintains the Deluge Lake trail as part of this program.

Over the past nine years, I've grown to love Eagle County for its sense of community and remarkable beauty. The diversity of topography, weather, vegetation, and wildlife never gets old. Despite having traveled many summers through the most remote corners of the area, I still have many unseen places to explore. I look forward to seeing many of you in the woods; don't forget to say hello!

