

Forty-Seventh Official Newsletter January-February 2005



Introduction to Friends:

The Friends of the Eagles Nest Wilderness is an apolitical nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation formed in May 1994 to raise in-cash, in-kind, and in-service goods to help the Dillon Ranger District of the White River National Forest maintain the Summit County portions of the Eagles Nest and Ptarmigan Peak Wilderness areas. The Eagles Nest Wilderness consists of 82,903 acres of Summit County while the Ptarmigan Peak Wilderness has 13,175 acres (totaling about 25% of Summit County). We presently raise money through membership dues, donations, and grants.

Big Plans for 2005

The Summit Foundation is Generous \$4,000 to FENW!

Once again, The Summit Foundation (TSF) granted Friends of the Eagles Nest Wilderness (FENW) a sizable amount of money — \$4,000 to be exact. TSF awarded \$3,600 to develop a Volunteer Wilderness Ranger program and recruit, coordinate, and train volunteers. Watch future editions of the newsletter and FENW's website, www.fenw.org, for more details on this exciting program.

Our FENW group brochure has grown out-of-date. The Summit Foundation also granted us \$400 to update and print a new group brochure.

Thanks also to the Lenzmeier/Williams Advised Fund at The Summit Foundation for donating part of the \$4,000.

Frisco Funds FENW

The Town of Frisco graciously granted FENW \$100 toward the Volunteer Wilderness Ranger Program.

2005 Season Wrap-Up

By Jonathan Kriegel

The 2004 trail season was highly successful. The Gateway project (brush clearing, removal of downed trees, and light maintenance on popular Wilderness portals) has matured into a June tradition in Summit County. We hope to nurture and feed this tradition for many years to come. Trailhead portal signs were repaired and downed trees were removed on many local trails. The northern trailheads near Cataract Lake received a lot of attention.

Both July and August work sessions concentrated on Buffalo Mountain. Many volunteers from our group teamed with other entities to complete a totally new trail to the summit of Buffalo Mountain. The new trail begins at the old cabin ruins just above 10,400 feet and switchbacks nicely up the mountainside using a reasonable grade calculated to be environmentally sustainable. At treeline the trail continues on more of a northerly bearing

offering wonderful views down to the wetlands of South Willow Creek. The new trail takes travelers north of the obvious false summit at 12,000 feet and then finally rejoins the climber's route for the final summit push. The old steep and slippery climber's route has been brushed in and closed. Our volunteers installed rock cairns on the above treeline portions of the new trail to keep hikers on route and safe.

As is traditional with our group, all trail work days were followed by refreshments and snacks. Media coverage was excellent as the Summit Daily News ran several pictures of our volunteers on Buffalo Mountain. All in all this summer yielded very tangible and positive results for Summit County's Wilderness.



Hearty FENW volunteers clearing trail on the Surprise Lake Trail during the Gateways project in June. photo by Kim Fenske

Thanks to FENW's Many Sponsors

In addition to those businesses, foundations, and towns mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, other businesses have also supported our efforts through in-kind services or donated goods. Please patronize our sponsors and let them know you appreciate their support of FENW!

Abbey's Coffee, Beaver Run Resort (lots of good food), Safeway, City Market Breck, City Market Dillon, Copy Copy, Wilderness Sports, the Summit Daily News, and Breckenridge Brewery.

Read the article on Buffalo Mountain for more sponsors!

Fielder Fundraiser a Great Success!

FENW's fundraiser featuring a slide show by John Fielder earned our group \$1,277 from book sales and \$1,942 from ticket sales. That's a whopping \$3,000 after expenses were paid. John generously donated 40% of the proceeds from book sales to our group. Besides enjoying a fantastic slide show of John's adventures photographing wild places for his new book, *Mountain Ranges of Colorado*, attendees bought Christmas presents for themselves and friends. Food and drink topped off the evening.

Thanks for your support, John and slide show attendees!



John Fielder listening to Currie Craven's welcome speech. Door prize pack on the left is from Wilderness Sports and everyone enjoyed the cake to the right. photo by Maryann Gaug

New Year's Howdy

Dear Friends:

I would like to wish all Friends of the Eagles Nest Wilderness a very Happy New Year and many thanks for your invaluable support in '04. The holidays were magical and joyous for the Craven home with my visiting parents making Christmas complete for the first time in many years.

You are probably aware 2004 marked FENW's 10th anniversary and the 40th of the landmark Wilderness Act. We shared many successes, making this year of milestones one of our greatest accomplishments and unfolding many promising opportunities. Adding outstanding board members, launching www.fenw.org, benefitting from an inspiring slide show by Colorado's most beloved photographer, John Fielder, and seeing our most ambitious project ever, the completion of the Buffalo Mountain trail, make 2004 our best year ever!

In an all-volunteer organization such as ours, the commitment of volunteers from the work boots to the board continues to inspire. Long-time board members Jonathan Kriegel and Maryann Gaug were rejoined by John Taylor and Kem Swarts, and welcomed Tom Jones, Sr. and Kim Fenske. The Board of Directors are grateful to all members who continue to be the core of our success through their membership dollars and volunteer labor. Board members invite all members to attend any Board meeting. We have held monthly meetings at the County Commons on the third Thursday evening. We are exploring changing the meeting night to the fourth Thursday to meet our active Board members' many interests and other time commitments. Please check our web site for Board meeting locations and times and consider joining us. Everyone's input and interest are always welcome. Please encourage your friends and neighbors to join us! As you know, membership is rewarding and fun!

The New Year offers exciting new opportunities. In this time of many challenges for the Forest Service, our volunteer partnership is recognized as being needed now more than ever. We are organizing a "Volunteer Wilderness Ranger" program to assist our local land managers. We are constructing a grant request to meet one of the USFS Chief's challenges, controlling invasive weeds in our local Wilderness Areas. In addition to traditional volunteer work projects, such as the field season's first, the "Gateways to the Wilderness" trail clearing, we are partnering with the Summit Fat Tire Society (SFTS) to construct a much needed loop option in the Salt Lick area. Please refer to our listing of projects in this newsletter and on the web site.

Thank you very much for all you have helped us achieve. This year will be critical for all of us to stay in touch with the challenge of responsible wilderness stewardship.

Have a safe and wonderful 2005. See you on the trail.

Currie
FENW President and Board Chair

2005 Tentative Trail Dates

We have already met with the Forest Service and set tentative dates and possible project locations for the upcoming season. The Gateway project is pretty firm and unlikely to be changed. The July and August dates and projects will be firmed up this spring.

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|---------|---|
| June 18 | Gateway Project - the usual suspects |
| July 23 | Boulder Lake, South Willow Creek wetlands, or Mahan Lake |
| August | Late in the month. South Willow Creek Wetlands or reroute of Salt Lick trail below Wilderness boundary in conjunction with Summit Fat Tire Society. |

Buffalo Mountain Trail Reconstruction Completed!



FENW volunteers with USFS trail crew leader, Don Dressler, on the new trail through the boulder field on Buffalo Mountain

photo by Currie Craven

After many years of talking and studying, trail reconstruction up Buffalo Mountain was finally completed during Summer 2004.

FENW received an \$18,900 grant from State Trails/Parks to hire the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps (RMYC) for four weeks. A crew of eight young adults (all over 18) and two crew leaders worked really hard on the mountain. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) trail crew of four also worked hard for four weeks. Luckily the weather cooperated and the thunderstorms held off until late afternoon.

FENW provided two volunteer trail crews for building cairns and buffing out the new trail. Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado (VOC) spent two days revegetating the old climber's trail.

Many thanks to The Summit Foundation, The Merriman Foundation, Buffalo Mountain Metro District, Colorado Mountain Club Foundation, 1st Bank Silverthorne, Wilderness Sports, Omni Real Estate, and Wildernest Property Management for donating most of the matching funds for the grant! USFS labor counted also. The Town of Silverthorne granted free showers and rec center passes for the RMYC crew, who were very grateful! Silverthorne also awarded FENW free rec center showers and Rainbow Park use for VOC camping.



Jonathan Kriegel and Marilyn Repsher building a cairn.

photo by Currie Craven



Above: RMYC crew building new trail.



Right: Don's gloves after 8 days.

Two below: USFS crew building new trail.

photos courtesy USFS



Left: FENW volunteers building cairn after cairn.

photo by Kim Fenske

Thanks to FENW Volunteers!

Thanks to the following volunteers who helped with our trail projects during summer 2004:

Gateways in June: Karen Fox, Virgil Robinson, Barbara Bouche, Maxine Solomon, Paul Saunders, Jeremy Puester, Marshall Rutz, John Taylor, Kim Fenske, Kurt Steuer, Currie Craven, Jonathan Kriegel, Guff Van Vooren, Kurt Morscher.

Buffalo Mountain in July: Don and Lee Parsons, Kim Fenske, John Koop, Currie Craven, Jonathan Kriegel, Guff Van Vooren, Dave Raymond, Marilyn Repsher.

Buffalo Mountain in August: Guy Warren, James Evans, Jordan Alcala, Joe Kramer, Miriam Choe, Kimberly Johnson, Spencer Ermart, Jeff Turre, Dave Blakeslee, Kurt Steuer, Bill Reed, Kim Fenske, Kurt Morscher, John Taylor.

National Forest Foundation Wilderness Challenge Grant Proposal

We need YOUR help to get this grant!

Volunteer Wilderness Ranger Project

For a couple of years, the FENW Board of Directors has discussed creating a Volunteer Wilderness Ranger (VWR) program to increase the number of visitor contacts in our Wilderness areas. Why? Many visitors (and even locals) don't understand what Wilderness is or how to travel softly on the land to preserve the wild characteristics for other visitors and wildlife.

Budget cuts to recreation and wilderness programs continue to plague the USFS in our area. The number of Wilderness rangers in the east end of the White River National Forest have decreased from four covering the Eagles Nest and Ptarmigan Peak Wilderness areas a few years ago to only two rangers last year for those two Wildernesses plus Holy Cross Wilderness.

During Gateways 2003, one volunteer expressed interest in being a Volunteer Wilderness Ranger and the ball started to roll.

With grants received this year from The Summit Foundation and the Town of Frisco, FENW will be developing a training program and recruiting interested volunteers for summer field work. If people are interested, the program can continue during the winter.

Noxious Weeds and Recreation Site Monitoring

The FENW Board caught wind of the National Forest Foundation's (NFF) Wilderness Stewardship grants. Dale Bosworth, Chief of the Forest Service, established the Wilderness Stewardship Challenge to assure that 100% of all Forest Service Wilderness Areas meet baseline standards by the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act in 2014. The FENW Board decided we could use the above VWR grant monies as matching funds for a larger project that would include not only the VWR program but also would train VWRs and other volunteers to identify and map areas of noxious weeds and to hire a contractor to treat the noxious weeds. While we're out there, we can also do some recreation site monitoring. Those tasks will meet three of Chief Bosworth's ten challenges. Several other items are already being addressed in the Dillon Ranger District.

Wilderness Challenges

To read more about the 10 challenges, check out: www.natio

nalforestfoundation.org/wilderness_stewardship_10year.html.

The three challenges which FENW plans to address are:

- Wilderness is successfully treated for noxious/invasive plants.
- Wilderness education plans are implemented.
- Wilderness has completed recreation site inventory.

Why are contacts, noxious weeds, and recreation site monitoring important? The four threats to National Forest lands.

On Jan. 16, 2004, Chief Bosworth gave a talk to the Idaho Environmental Forum. He discussed four threats to our forests and grasslands. Two of those threats are the spread of invasive species and unmanaged outdoor recreation.

Some key points on these two threats:

Invasive Species:

1. Economically, invasive weeds cost the U.S. about \$13 billion per year. For all invasives combined, it comes to about \$138 billion per year in total economic damages and associated control costs.
2. Ecologically, invasives threaten the survival of native species. Scientists estimate that invasives contribute to the decline of up to half of all endangered species. Invasives are the single greatest cause of loss of biodiversity in the US, second only to loss of habitat.



Yellow Toadflax, a noxious weed in Summit County
photo courtesy Colorado Weed Mgmt. Assoc.

Unmanaged Outdoor Recreation:

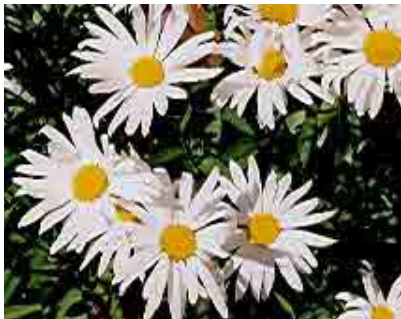
Visitors to National Forest System managed lands grew 18 times from 1946 to 2000. In 2002, the number of visitors reached 214 million. As the U.S. population is expected to more than double by 2100, the number of visitors to national forests and grasslands is expected to dramatically increase.

To read more about the four threats and link to the Chief's speech, check out: www.fs.fed.us/projects/four-threats/.

Local Weed Problems

Do we have a noxious weed problem in our Wilderness areas? We sure do. The USFS has identified many areas of noxious weeds near Cataract Lake and in areas near North Rock Creek, Slate Creek, and Brush Creek. USFS Wilderness manager, Beth Boyst, indicated to the Board that noxious weeds are a definite problem but we have a chance to actually eradicate them in our

area. Some areas in other White River National Forest Wildernesses have so many noxious weeds the most the USFS can do is contain the weeds and prevent them from spreading.



Oxeyed Daisies, noxious weeds in Summit County
photo by Kim Fenske

Please help us help our Wilderness areas!

Grant Strategy

The National Forest Foundation (NFF) grant is a 50-50 matching grant. The entire project of Volunteer Wilderness Ranger, recreation site monitoring, noxious weed inventory, and treatment of up to 60 acres of weeds in 30 days is estimated to cost \$21,350. Weed treatment alone is about \$15,500.

We plan to request 50% (\$10,675) from NFF.

FENW already has received grants and earmarked donations for \$5,350 in matching funds. We will pitch in money from our treasury from fundraisers, but need to save some dollars for seed money for future years of weed treatment.

We need to raise at least another \$4,500 in matching funds to show community support!

FENW will apply for a \$500 cost-sharing program from the Summit County noxious weed program (50-50 match).

We will also apply for a 50-50 matching grant from the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

By applying donations and matching grants, FENW can show a lot of community support and involvement which will earn points toward winning the NFF grant. We'll earmark any extra donations for the following years of noxious weed treatment.

How can YOU help?

We need ideas and donations from FENW members and other community members, for example landowners down the Lower Blue, to generate matching funds for these grant proposals. Please talk with business owners, ranchers, landowners, community members, and open your own wallets just a little to contribute to the cause.

The noxious weed project will last at least three years because weed treatment on the same weed patch takes that long to be successful. Once we identify additional areas of noxious weeds, we will continue to apply for matching grants to treat them for three years each.

If you have any questions on our plans and fundraising, please contact Maryann at 468-6219 or maryann@fenw.org.

Time Frame - Feb. 26, 2005

The catch is that the grant proposal must be finalized by Feb.

26. The more matching funds and community support that we can document by then, the more chance we have of getting an NFF grant. We don't need the money by then, just the commitment.

If you or any of your friends would like to donate or pledge donations to the matching funds for this ambitious project, please make your checks payable to FENW, note the check is for the NFF grant proposal, and mail the check to OR send a pledge letter stating the amount you will donate if we get the NFF grant to:

FENW Grants
P.O. Box 4504
Frisco, CO 80443-4504

Thanks in advance!

FENW Board Meetings Change in meeting date

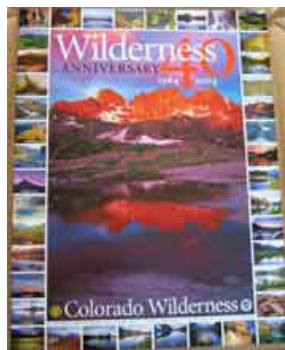
Members are always welcome to attend FENW Board meetings. We will now be meeting on the fourth Thursday of each month at 6 pm, usually in the County Commons in one of the rooms near the library. If you plan to attend, contact one of the Board members to verify time and place, just in case.

FENW Secretary Needed!

FENW needs a secretary of the Board. Jonathan Kriegel is filling in for the time being, but he's already the VP, on the Forest Travel Management team, and heads up our trail projects.

If you would like to help out, please contact either Currie at currie@fenw.org or 453-9056 or Maryann at maryann@fenw.org or 468-6219.

Wilderness Posters for Sale



FENW is still selling Colorado Wilderness 40th Anniversary posters. The photos on the poster were donated by John Fielder. Buy yours now at Wilderness Sports in Silverthorne. A bargain at \$18! Proceeds help FENW with many activities.

Travel Management Draft!?!?

The White River National Forest is planning to release the draft Travel Management Plan in Spring 2005. A public comment period will then commence. The Travel Management Plan accompanies the Revised Forest Plan released in April 2002. The Final Travel Management Plan will be released about one year after the comment period ends.

Watch the FENW newsletter and website for more information.

www.fenw.org

Jan./Feb. 2005 Newsletter
Page 5

Friends of the Eagles Nest Wilderness
P.O. Box 4504
Frisco, CO 80443-4504

Membership Expiration

Please note your membership expiration date located below your address on the envelope. (If you have paid recently, please excuse the lack of update on the date.) Please use the membership form below to renew your membership. Please help us gain new members by passing this form along to friends and family.

Remember to send any email or address changes to FENW!

FENW Board of Directors

Currie Craven, Chairman/President, 453-9056
Jonathan Kriegel, VP, Travel Management Task Force, Trail chairperson, 262-2399
open, Secretary — any volunteers?????
John Taylor, Treasurer, 262-5940
Maryann Gaug, At-Large and grant proposals, 468-6219
Kim Fenske, At-Large, 389-4436
Kem Swarts, At-Large, 453-9383
Tom Jones, Sr., At-Large, 468-5463

Friends of the Eagles Nest Wilderness Membership Form

Yes! I want to join Friends and help preserve Summit County Wilderness. Sign me up at the:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trailhead level (\$10 per year) | <input type="checkbox"/> Red-Buffalo Pass level (\$50 per year) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buffalo Mountain level (\$20 per year) | <input type="checkbox"/> Eagles Nest level (\$100 per year) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cataract Lake level (\$30 per year) | <input type="checkbox"/> Mount Powell level (\$500 per year) |

Name: _____ Mailing Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Are you willing to work on volunteer projects? _____

Email Address: _____ I can best work _____ weekdays _____ weekends

Please mail your membership form to: Friends of the Eagles Nest Wilderness, PO Box 4504, Frisco, CO 80443-4504.

For information, call 970-453-9056, 970-262-2399 or info@fenw.org. Check out our website: www.fenw.org.