

I Love Colorado State Parks Act



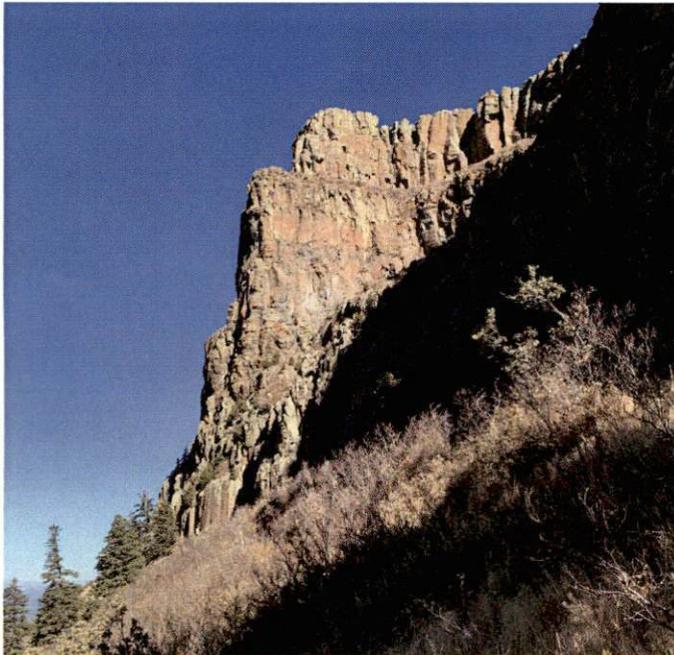
ADDRESSING INCREASED PARK VISITATION STATEWIDE AND OPENING COLORADO'S NEXT STATE PARK

Senate Bill 20-003 Overview

Bill sponsors: Senators Garcia & Hisey and Representatives Esgar & Will

Colorado is legendary for its outdoor recreation opportunities, and state parks provide an important gateway for Colorado citizens and visitors to experience the outdoors in a safe, family-friendly environment. Colorado's state park system accommodates over 15 million visitors each year and contributes \$1.2 billion annually to the state's economy. However, visitation at state parks has grown steadily over the last

five years, with a net increase of more than 2.2 million visitors, and maintenance and capacity improvements have not kept up with this significant growth in demand. While the legislature traditionally invested over five million dollars of General Fund annually in our state park system, that appropriation was zeroed-out in FY11-12. Nearly a decade later, it is time to reinvest in the state parks that we love.

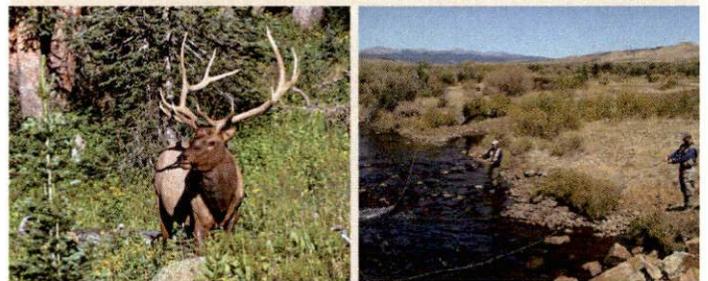


Colorado's Next State Park

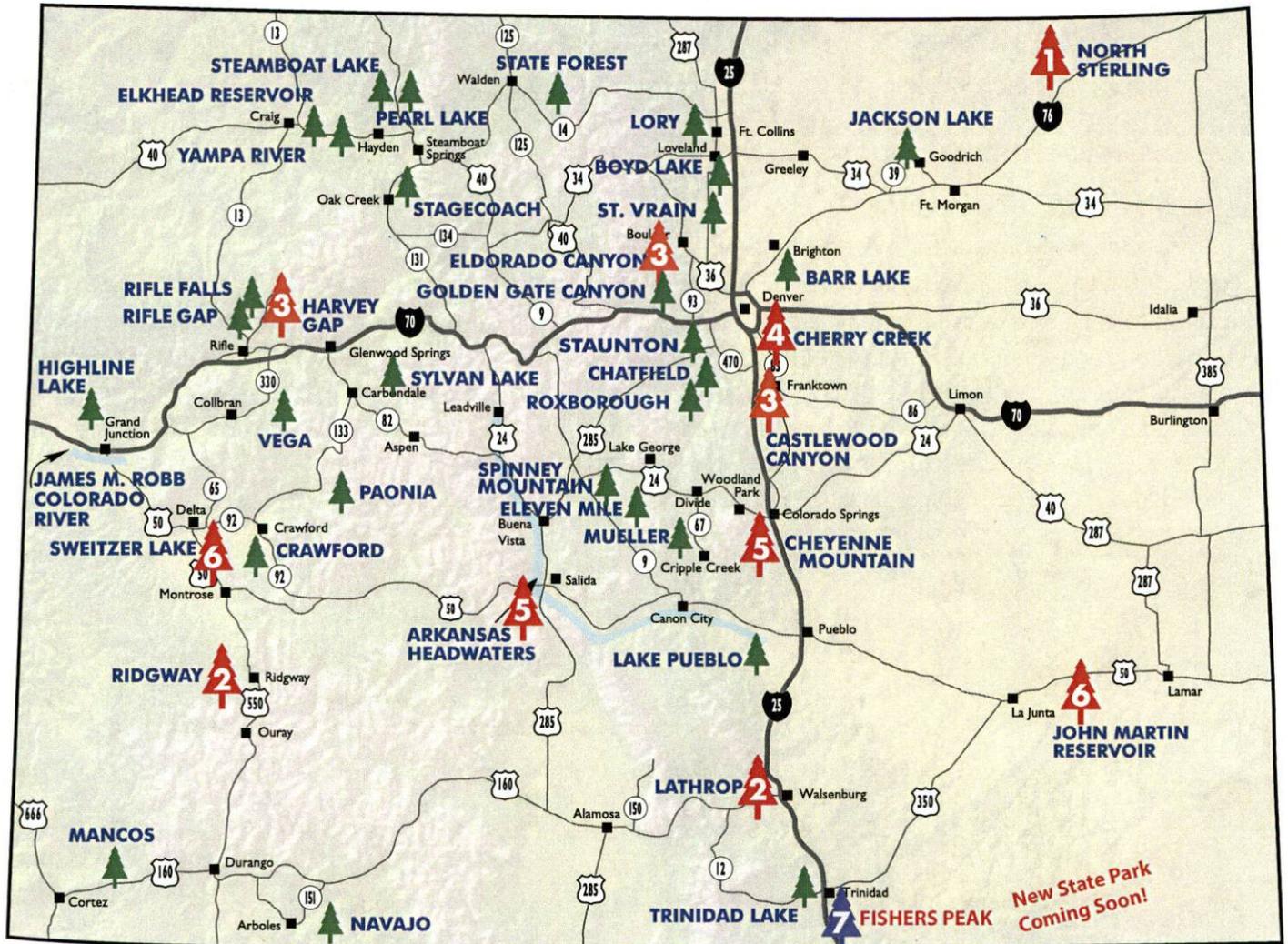
The 19,200-acre Fishers Peak Ranch, also known as the Crazy French property, is located southeast of Trinidad in Las Animas County. The property includes Fishers Peak, which is visible for miles and is the highest mountain peak in Colorado east of I-25 at 9,633-feet. Funding authorized by this bill will accelerate the master planning process and allow for the rapid development of park infrastructure, with the goal of providing public recreational access to the property by early 2021. The first phase of development at Colorado's next state park will include 23-miles of multi-use non-motorized trails, restrooms, picnic areas, ADA access, parking, wildlife viewing areas, and habitat improvements.

Improvements to the Parks We Love

Colorado's state parks are in jeopardy of being loved to death due to rapidly-increasing visitation. The state park system is over 60-years-old, and aging facilities require continuous maintenance and improvement. This upkeep is also an important part of sustaining a solid visitation base, which generates the revenue necessary to cover the majority of day-to-day park operating costs. In addition to maintenance, expanding the capacity of existing infrastructure in the state park system will help ease issues with increasing visitation, providing more ways for Colorado families and visitors to recreate, more spaces to introduce kids to the outdoors, and more opportunities to increase the economic benefits of outdoor recreation.



Colorado State Parks



- 1. Visitor's Center at North Sterling State Park** — This project will include the design of a new visitor's center. This phase of the project will be the first step toward replacing an outdated facility that does not currently meet the needs of the park visitors.
- 2. Group Campgrounds** — State parks are experiencing more people camping in groups versus the traditional single-family model. This project includes the development of new group facilities at **Ridgway State Park** and the enhancement of primitive group facilities at **Lathrop State Park**, including the construction of larger shade/picnic areas
- 3. Restroom Facility Upgrades** — Restroom facilities within our state parks are coming to the end of their design life. The projects include the removal, replacement and addition of new concrete vault toilets at **Castlewood Canyon**, **Harvey Gap** and **Eldorado Canyon** state parks.
- 4. Dog Off Leash Area and Road Improvements at Cherry Creek State Park** — Just as the camping needs of our visitors have changed, so have their recreational needs. This project will develop the visitor-control features, and vegetation-management tools needed to accommodate increased use of **Cherry Creek's** existing dog park. The road network at the park, which is approximately 30-years-old, also serves a vital role in providing

visitor access to recreational opportunities. The road project will include the rehabilitation of parking areas, road surfaces, and associated bike lanes within the park.

- 5. Upgrades to Campgrounds** — As camping continues to grow in popularity throughout the state this project will allow CPW to increase the number of camping spaces at two of the current state parks. This will include **Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area** and **Cheyenne Mountain State Park**.
- 6. Day Use Area Upgrades** — This project will include a combination of upgrades to existing day use areas to provide additional ADA accessibility, restroom facilities, shade structures, grills and picnic tables at **John Martin State Park** and **Sweitzer Lake State Park**.
- 7. New State Park** — The addition of a new state park will help CPW meet some of the increased recreational needs of Colorado's residents and visitors. Fishers Peak is a distinct backdrop for the City of Trinidad that will provide a multitude of recreational amenities and wildlife opportunities across the vast 19,200 acres of the Fishers Peak property. The first phase of development at this new state park will include 23 miles of multi-use non-motorized trails, restrooms, picnic areas, ADA access, parking, wildlife viewing areas and habitat improvements.