

**Second Regular Session
Seventy-fifth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. R26-0828.01 Faith Marcovecchio x4331

SJR26-015

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Roberts and Amabile,

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Lukens and Velasco, Stewart K., Boesenecker, Camacho, Duran, Froelich, Hamrick, Lindsay, Martinez, Mauro, McCormick, Nguyen, Phillips, Rydin, Smith, Stewart R., Titone, Willford

Senate Committees

House Committees

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 26-015

101 **CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC'S INTEREST IN THE**
102 **MANAGEMENT OF COLORADO'S NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS.**

1 WHEREAS, Coloradans have a deep, unifying love and affection
2 for our shared national public lands and the essential, diverse benefits
3 they provide to everyone; and

4 WHEREAS, Our national public lands, including national parks,
5 forests, monuments, national wildlife refuges, and Bureau of Land
6 Management lands, are foundational to Coloradans' quality of life,
7 economy, and common heritage, offering invaluable recreational,
8 economic, cultural, and spiritual opportunities; and

9 WHEREAS, Outdoor recreation, intrinsically linked to our public
10 lands, contributed over \$36.5 billion to Colorado's economy in 2023,
11 supported more than 404,000 jobs, and demonstrated the profound
12 economic value of these resources when managed for the public good;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, According to the 2024 Colorado College State of the
15 Rockies poll, 88 percent of Westerners visited national public lands in the

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.
Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.

1 previous year, with nearly one-fourth visiting more than 10 times, and 84
2 percent of Coloradans support the creation of new national parks, national
3 monuments, and national wildlife refuges; and

4 WHEREAS, Our public lands provide important wildlife habitats,
5 clean water, clean air, and natural amenities that contribute to Coloradans'
6 quality of life and Colorado's climate resiliency; and

7 WHEREAS, In 2016, through Senate Bill 16-021, Colorado
8 created a state holiday to recognize and pay tribute to our public lands:
9 Public Lands Day on the third Saturday of each May; and

10 WHEREAS, The effective stewardship of these lands requires a
11 robust partnership between the federal government and the American
12 public, ensuring decisions reflect the diverse interests and values of all
13 citizens, regardless of location or background; and

14 WHEREAS, Bedrock federal laws such as the "Federal Land
15 Policy and Management Act of 1976" (FLPMA) and the "National
16 Environmental Policy Act of 1969" (NEPA) were enacted to define the
17 federal government's fiduciary duty to the American people, requiring
18 balanced resource management, ensuring that federal decisions are
19 informed by public input, and protecting the long-term, sustainable use
20 of public lands; and

21 WHEREAS, Recent actions at the federal level, including
22 significant policy changes, the reduction of on-the-ground management
23 resources, and the streamlining of regulatory processes, risk undermining
24 the bedrock principles of effective public land stewardship; and

25 WHEREAS, While not an overt sell-off, these cumulative actions,
26 such as diminishing public engagement opportunities, shortening review
27 timelines, and increasing regulatory instability, have the troubling effect
28 of centralizing power in Washington, D.C., while marginalizing the
29 voices of local communities and land users; and

30 WHEREAS, This shift toward a less accountable management
31 structure reduces transparency and legal durability, disproportionately
32 favoring certain expedited private interests over the long-term, balanced
33 needs of the public, thereby creating a de facto loss of the public's access,
34 involvement, and recourse regarding the future of their shared national
35 assets; and

1 WHEREAS, Protecting the integrity of the public process and
2 ensuring fair access to our shared national resources are fundamentally
3 nonpartisan issues that uphold the democratic ideals embodied by our
4 public land system; now, therefore,

5 *Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Seventy-fifth General Assembly*
6 *of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein:*

7 That we, the members of the Colorado General Assembly:

8 (1) Declare our unwavering support for maintaining our national
9 public lands under the stewardship of the United States government and
10 the federal land management agencies, and for the foundational public
11 processes designed to guide their sustainable use;

12 (2) Oppose all efforts, whether legislative or administrative, that
13 directly or indirectly diminish the public's voice, access, and recourse in
14 the management of national public lands, including the erosion of
15 bedrock laws such as the "National Environmental Policy Act of 1969"
16 (NEPA) and the "Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976"
17 (FLPMA); and

18 (3) Call upon the members of Colorado's congressional
19 delegation, the governor, and the attorney general to take all necessary
20 actions to defend the public process and statutory safeguards that ensure
21 public lands are managed for the broadest possible public benefit, rather
22 than being effectively privatized or subjugated to narrow special interests.

23 *Be It Further Resolved*, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent
24 to Governor Jared Polis; United States Senators John Hickenlooper and
25 Michael Bennet; United States Representatives Diana DeGette, Joe
26 Neguse, Jeff Hurd, Lauren Boebert, Jeff Crank, Jason Crow, Brittany
27 Pettersen, and Gabe Evans; Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum; and
28 President Donald J. Trump.