



SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 26-015

BY SENATOR(S) Roberts and Amabile, Ball, Benavidez, Bridges, Cutter, Danielson, Exum, Gonzales J., Hinrichsen, Jodeh, Kipp, Kolker, Lindstedt, Mullica, Snyder, Sullivan, Wallace, Weissman, Coleman;
also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Lukens and Velasco, Stewart K., Boesenecker, Camacho, Duran, Froelich, Hamrick, Lindsay, Martinez, Mauro, McCormick, Nguyen, Phillips, Rydin, Smith, Stewart R., Titone, Willford, Bacon, Brown, Carter, Clifford, English, Garcia, Gilchrist, Goldstein, Jackson, Joseph, Lieder, Mabrey, Marshall, Rutinel, Sirota, Story, Valdez, Woodrow, Zokaie, McCluskie.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, This shift toward a less accountable management structure reduces transparency and legal durability, disproportionately favoring certain expedited private interests over the long-term, balanced needs of the public, thereby creating a de facto loss of the public's access,

involvement, and recourse regarding the future of their shared national assets; and

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

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

That we, the members of the Colorado General Assembly:

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

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

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

Be It Further Resolved, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent to Governor Jared Polis; United States Senators John Hickenlooper and Michael Bennet; United States Representatives Diana DeGette, Joe Neguse, Jeff Hurd, Lauren Boebert, Jeff Crank, Jason Crow, Brittany

Pettersen, and Gabe Evans; Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum; and President Donald J. Trump.

James Rashad Coleman Sr.
PRESIDENT OF
THE SENATE

Julie McCluskie
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES

Esther van Mourik
SECRETARY OF
THE SENATE

Vanessa Reilly
CHIEF CLERK OF THE HOUSE
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