



Readers Guide to Gunnison Outdoor Resources Protection Act

This guide provides brief explanations of key provisions of the bill.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Gunnison Outdoor Resources Protection Act of 2025”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **COLLABORATIVELY DEVELOPED.**—The term “collaboratively developed”, with respect to a project, means the project is developed and implemented through a collaborative process that—

(A) includes multiple interested persons representing diverse interests; and

(B)(i) is transparent and nonexclusive; or

(ii) meets the requirements for a resource advisory committee under—

(I) for projects carried out on National Forest System land, subsections (c) through (f) of section 205 of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 7125); or

(II) for projects carried out on Bureau of Land Management land, subpart 1784 of part 1700 of title 43, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations).

(2) **COUNTY.**—The term “County” means Gunnison County, Colorado.

(3) **COVERED AREA.**—The term “covered area” means each of the Special Management Areas, Wildlife Conservation Areas, Protection Areas, and Recreation Management Areas and the Scientific Research and Education Area.

(4) **DECOMMISSION.**—The term “decommission”, with respect to a road, means—

(A) reestablishing native vegetation on the road;

(B) restoring any natural drainage, watershed function, or other ecological processes that were disrupted or adversely impacted by the road by removing or hydrologically disconnecting the road prism and reestablishing stable slope contours;

(C) effectively blocking the road to vehicular traffic, where feasible; and

(D) developing and implementing an effective monitoring and response plan for invasive species and vehicular traffic incursions.

(5) ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY.—The term “ecological integrity” has the meaning given the term in section 219.19 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act).

(6) OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE.—The term “off-highway vehicle”—

(A) with respect to National Forest System land, has the meaning given the term in section 212.1 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation); and

(B) with respect to land managed by the Bureau of Land Management, has the meaning given the term “off-road vehicle” in section 8340.0-5 of title 43, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation).

(7) OVER-SNOW VEHICLE.—The term “over-snow vehicle” has the meaning given the term in section 212.1 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation).

(8) PROTECTION AREA.—The term “Protection Area” means a protection area designated by section 5(a).

(9) RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREA.—The term “Recreation Management Area” means a recreation management area designated by section 6(a).

(10) RESTORE.—The term “restore” has the meaning given the term in section 219.19 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act).

(11) SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND EDUCATION AREA.—The term “Scientific Research and Education Area” means the Rocky Mountain Scientific Research and Education Area designated by section 7(a).

(12) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means—

(A) the Secretary of Agriculture (acting through the Chief of the Forest Service), with respect to National Forest System land; and

(B) the Secretary of the Interior with respect to land managed by the Director of the Bureau of Land Management.

(13) SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA.—The term “Special Management Area” means a special management area designated by section 3(a).

(14) STATE.—The term “State” means the State of Colorado.

(15) WILDERNESS AREA.—The term “wilderness area” means any area designated as wilderness by the amendments to section 2(a) of the Colorado Wilderness Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1132 note; Public Law 103–77) made by section 8(a).

(16) WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE.—The term “wildland-urban interface” means land within a covered area that is within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of the interface and intermix areas mapped as the wildland-urban interface in the document entitled “The 2010 Wildland-Urban Interface of the Conterminous United States” and published by the Department of Agriculture in 2015.

(17) WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA.—The term “Wildlife Conservation Area” means a wildlife conservation area designated by section 4(a).

(18) WINTER TRAVEL MANAGEMENT PLAN.—The term “winter travel management plan” means a decision designating roads, trails, or areas for over-snow vehicle use in accordance with—

(A) in the case of Forest Service land within a covered area, subpart C of part 212 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations); and

(B) in the case of Bureau of Land Management land within a covered area, subpart 8342 of title 43, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations).

SEC. 3. DESIGNATION OF SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREAS.

(a) Designation.—

(1) AMERICAN FLAG SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Forest Service comprising approximately 36,171 acres, as generally depicted as “American Flag SMA” on the map entitled “Sheet 4: Brush Creek, Cement Creek, and Spring Creek” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “American Flag Special Management Area”.

(2) BECKWITHS SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Forest Service comprising approximately 24,031 acres, as generally depicted as “Beckwiths SMA” on the map entitled “Sheet 3: Kebler and Schofield Pass” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Beckwiths Special Management Area”.

(3) CLEAR FORK SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Forest Service comprising approximately 37,998 acres, as generally depicted as “Clear Fork SMA” on the map entitled “Sheet 2: McClure Pass” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Clear Fork Special Management Area”.

(4) MCINTOSH MOUNTAIN SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service comprising approximately 22,497 acres, as generally depicted as “McIntosh Mountain SMA” on the map entitled “Sheet 8: Gunnison Valley and Ohio Pass” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “McIntosh Mountain Special Management Area”.

(5) NORTH POVERTY GULCH SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Forest Service comprising approximately 5,476 acres, as generally depicted as “North Poverty Gulch SMA” on the map entitled “Sheet 3: Kebler and Schofield Pass” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “North Poverty Gulch Special Management Area”.

(6) PILOT KNOB SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Forest Service comprising approximately 16,973 acres, as generally depicted as “Pilot Knob SMA” on the map entitled “Sheet 2: McClure Pass” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Pilot Knob Special Management Area”.

(7) SIGNAL PEAK SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service comprising approximately 28,345 acres, as generally depicted as “Signal Peak SMA” on the map entitled “Sheet 9: Cabin Creek” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Signal Peak Special Management Area”.

(8) UNION PARK SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain

Federal land in the County managed by the Forest Service comprising approximately 22,483 acres, as generally depicted as “Union Park SMA” on the map entitled “Sheet 5: Union Park” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Union Park Special Management Area”.

(9) WHETSTONE HEADWATERS SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management comprising approximately 20,676 acres, as generally depicted as “Whetstone Headwaters SMA” on the map entitled “Sheet 3: Kebler and Schofield Pass” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Whetstone Headwaters Special Management Area”.

(b) Purpose.—The purpose of the Special Management Areas is to conserve, protect, and enhance for the benefit of present and future generations the natural, scenic, scientific, cultural, watershed, recreation, and wildlife resources of the Special Management Areas.

(c) Management.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall manage the Special Management Areas in a manner that—

(A) conserves, protects, and enhances the resources of the Special Management Areas; and

(B) is in accordance with—

(i) this Act; and

(ii) other applicable laws.

(2) USES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall only allow uses of the Special Management Areas that the Secretary determines would further the purpose described in subsection (b).

(B) VEHICLE AND BICYCLE USE.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The use of off-highway vehicles and bicycles in the Special Management Areas shall be permitted only on roads, trails, and areas designated for use by those vehicles on the date of enactment of this Act, except—

(I) as needed for administrative purposes;

(II) to respond to an emergency; or

(III) as authorized under clauses (ii) and (iii).

(ii) WINTER TRAVEL MANAGEMENT.—For any portion of a Special Management Area for which the Secretary has not adopted a winter travel management plan as of the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary—

(I) shall, not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, adopt a winter travel management plan with respect to the applicable portion of the Special Management Area; and

(II) may, during any period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and ending on the date of adoption of a winter travel management plan for

the applicable portion under subclause (I), permit the use of over-snow vehicles in the applicable portion of the Special Management Area in accordance with the applicable land management plan or other applicable management direction.

(iii) POTENTIAL TRAILS.—The Secretary may permit—

(I) the use of bicycles on the potential trails described in paragraph (3) if the trails are designated by the Secretary for the use; and

(II) the use of off-highway vehicles on the potential trails described in subparagraphs (A), (C), and (F) of paragraph (3) if the trails are designated by the Secretary for the use.

(3) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this section affects the potential development, in accordance with applicable law, of—

(A) a proposed trail of less than 50 inches in width, commonly known as the “Big Grassy Trail”, within the American Flag Special Management Area designated by subsection (a)(1);

(B) the proposed trails, commonly known as the “Crested Butte to Paonia Trail” and the “Crested Butte to Carbondale Trail”, within the Beckwiths Special Management Area designated by subsection (a)(2);

(C) the proposed trails, commonly known as the “Antelope Ridge Trail and Connector”, the “East West Antelope Trail”, the “West Antelope Trail”, and the “Mill Creek Connector”, within the McIntosh Mountain Special Management Area designated by subsection (a)(4);

(D) the proposed trail, commonly known as the “Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail”, and the trails generally depicted in figure 7 of the document entitled “Candidate Conservation Agreement: For the Gunnison sage-grouse, *Centrocercus minimus*—Gunnison Basin Population” and dated 2012 within the Signal Peak Special Management Area designated by subsection (a)(7);

(E) the proposed trails, commonly known as the “Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail” and the “Baxter Gulch to Splain’s Gulch Trail”, in the Whetstone Headwaters Special Management Area designated by subsection (a)(9); or

(F) the proposed trail, commonly known as the “Splain’s Gulch to Carbon Creek Trail”, in the Whetstone Headwaters Special Management Area designated by subsection (a)(9).

SEC. 4. DESIGNATION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREAS.

(a) Designation.—

(1) CABIN CREEK WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service comprising approximately 29,518 acres, as generally depicted as “Cabin Creek WCA” on the map entitled “Sheet 9: Cabin Creek” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Cabin Creek Wildlife Conservation Area”.

(2) FLAT TOP WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Forest Service comprising approximately 28,844 acres, as generally depicted as “Flat Top WCA” on the map entitled “Sheet 8: Gunnison Valley and Ohio Pass” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Flat Top Wildlife Conservation Area”.

(3) LAKE GULCH AND CEBOLLA CREEK WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Bureau of Land Management comprising approximately 50,535 acres, as generally depicted as “Lake Gulch and Cebolla Creek WCA” on the map entitled “Sheet 11: Lake Fork” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Lake Gulch and Cebolla Creek Wildlife Conservation Area”.

(4) MATCHLESS WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management comprising approximately 12,975 acres, as generally depicted as “Matchless WCA” on the map entitled “Sheet 4: Brush Creek, Cement Creek, and Spring Creek” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Matchless Wildlife Conservation Area”.

(5) MUNSEY CREEK WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management comprising approximately 3,281 acres, as generally depicted as “Munsey Creek WCA” on the map entitled “Sheet 3: Kebler and Schofield Pass” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Munsey Creek Wildlife Conservation Area”.

(6) PINNACLES WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management comprising approximately 27,935 acres, as generally depicted as “Pinnacles WCA” on the map entitled “Sheet 8: Gunnison Valley and Ohio Pass” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Pinnacles Wildlife Conservation Area”.

(7) POWDERHORN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Bureau of Land Management comprising approximately 27,668 acres, as generally depicted as “Powderhorn WCA” on the map entitled “Sheet 11: Lake Fork” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Powderhorn Wildlife Conservation Area”.

(8) SAWTOOTH WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County and in Saguache County, Colorado, managed by the Bureau of Land Management comprising approximately 43,109 acres, as generally depicted as “Sawtooth WCA” on the map entitled “Sheet 11: Lake Fork” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Sawtooth Wildlife Conservation Area”.

(b) Purposes.—The purposes of the Wildlife Conservation Areas are—

(1) to conserve, protect, enhance, and restore for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations the wildlife and wildlife habitat of the Wildlife Conservation Areas; and

(2) to conserve, protect, and enhance for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations the natural, scenic, scientific, cultural, watershed, and recreation resources of the Wildlife Conservation Areas.

(c) Management.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall manage the Wildlife Conservation Areas in a manner that—

(A) furthers the purposes of the Wildlife Conservation Areas; and

(B) is in accordance with—

(i) this Act; and

(ii) other applicable laws.

(2) USES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall only allow uses of the Wildlife Conservation Areas that the Secretary determines would further the purposes described in subsection (b).

(B) VEHICLE AND BICYCLE USE.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The use of off-highway vehicles and bicycles in the Wildlife Conservation Areas shall be permitted only on roads, trails, and areas designated for the uses on the date of enactment of this Act.

(ii) EXCEPTIONS.—Notwithstanding clause (i)—

(I) off-highway vehicles and bicycles may be permitted—

(aa) as needed for administrative purposes; or

(bb) to respond to an emergency;

(II) for any portion of a Wildlife Conservation Area for which the Secretary has not adopted a winter travel management plan as of the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary—

(aa) shall, not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, adopt a winter travel management plan for the applicable portion of the Wildlife Conservation Area; and

(bb) may, during the period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and ending on the date of adoption of a winter travel management plan for the applicable portion under item (aa), permit the use of over-snow vehicles in the applicable portion of the Wildlife Conservation Area in accordance with the applicable land management plan or other applicable management direction;

(III) except as authorized under subclause (I), the use of off-highway vehicles and bicycles shall be prohibited in the Matchless Wildlife Conservation Area designated by subsection (a)(4); and

(IV) the Secretary may permit the use of bicycles on the potential trails described in paragraph (3) if the trails are designated by the Secretary for the use.

(3) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this section affects the potential development, in accordance with applicable law, of—

(A) the proposed trail, commonly known as the “Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail”, in the Flat Top Wildlife Conservation Area designated by subsection (a)(2);

(B) the proposed trail, commonly known as the “Crested Butte to Carbondale Trail”, in the Munsey Creek Wildlife Conservation Area designated by subsection (a)(5); or

(C) the proposed trails, commonly known as the “Tenderfoot Mountain to Bambi’s Trail” and the “Big Loop Trail”, in the Sawtooth Wildlife Conservation Area designated by subsection (a)(8).

SEC. 5. DESIGNATION OF PROTECTION AREAS.

(a) Designation.—

(1) CASTLE PROTECTION AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Forest Service comprising approximately 6,390 acres, as generally depicted as “Castle Protection Area” on the map entitled “Sheet 8: Gunnison Valley and Ohio Pass” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Castle Protection Area”.

(2) DEER CREEK PROTECTION AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Forest Service comprising approximately 3,136 acres, as generally depicted as “Deer Creek Protection Area” on the map entitled “Sheet 3: Kebler and Schofield Pass” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Deer Creek Protection Area”.

(3) GRANITE BASIN PROTECTION AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management comprising approximately 9,666 acres, as generally depicted as “Granite Basin Protection Area” on the map entitled “Sheet 4: Brush Creek, Cement Creek, and Spring Creek” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Granite Basin Protection Area”.

(4) SOUTH POVERTY GULCH PROTECTION AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management comprising approximately 1,350 acres, as generally depicted as “South Poverty Gulch Protection Area” on the map entitled “Sheet 3: Kebler and Schofield Pass” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “South Poverty Gulch Protection Area”.

(b) Purposes.—The purposes of the Protection Areas are—

- (1) to protect the natural and undeveloped character of the Protection Areas; and
- (2) to conserve and protect for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations the natural, scenic, scientific, cultural, watershed, recreation, and wildlife resources of the Protection Areas.

(c) Management.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall manage the Protection Areas in a manner that—

- (A) furthers the purposes of the Protection Areas described in subsection (b); and
- (B) is in accordance with—
 - (i) this Act; and
 - (ii) other applicable laws.

(2) USES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall only allow uses of the Protection Areas that the Secretary determines would further the purposes described in subsection (b).

(B) VEHICLE USE.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), as needed for administrative purposes, or to respond to an emergency, the use of off-highway vehicles in the Protection Areas is prohibited.

(ii) OVER-SNOW VEHICLES.—The Secretary may permit the use of over-snow vehicles in the Deer Creek Protection Area designated by subsection (a)(2) on roads, trails, and areas designated for the use on the date of enactment of this Act.

(C) BICYCLES.—The Secretary may permit the use of bicycles in the Protection Areas only—

(i) on roads and trails designated for the use on the date of enactment of this Act;

(ii) as needed for administrative purposes;

(iii) to respond to an emergency; or

(iv) if designated by the Secretary for the use on the potential trails described in paragraph (3).

(3) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this section affects the potential development, in accordance with applicable law, of—

(A) the proposed trail, commonly known as the “Deer Creek to Brush Creek Connector Trail”, within the Deer Creek Protection Area designated by subsection (a)(2);

(B) the proposed trail, commonly known as the “Eccher Exit Trail”, within the Granite Basin Protection Area designated by subsection (a)(3); or

(C) the proposed trail, commonly known as the “Lower Loop Trail Extension”, in the South Poverty Gulch Protection Area designated by subsection (a)(4).

SEC. 6. DESIGNATION OF RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREAS.

(a) Designation.—

(1) DOUBLE TOP RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Forest Service comprising approximately 14,734 acres, as generally depicted as “Double Top RMA” on the map entitled “Sheet 4: Brush Creek, Cement Creek, and Spring Creek” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Double Top Recreation Management Area”.

(2) HORSE RANCH PARK RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREA.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land in the County managed by the Forest Service comprising approximately 3,513 acres, as generally depicted as “Horse Ranch Park RMA” on the map entitled “Sheet 3: Kebler and Schofield Pass” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Horse Ranch Park Recreation Management Area”.

(b) Purposes.—The purposes of the Recreation Management Areas are—

(1) to provide for, and improve the management of, recreation resources in the Recreation Management Areas for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generation; and

(2) to conserve, protect, and enhance for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future

generations the natural, scenic, scientific, cultural, watershed, and wildlife resources of the Recreation Management Areas.

(c) Management.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall manage the Recreation Management Areas in a manner that—

(A) furthers the purposes of the Recreation Management Areas described in subsection (b); and

(B) is in accordance with—

(i) this Act; and

(ii) other applicable laws.

(2) USES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall only allow uses of the Recreation Management Areas that the Secretary determines would further the purposes described in subsection (b).

(B) VEHICLE AND BICYCLE USE.—

(i) DOUBLE TOP.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subclause (II), the use of off-highway vehicles and bicycles in the Double Top Recreation Management Area designated by subsection (a)(1) shall be permitted only on roads and trails designated for the use on the date of enactment of this Act.

(II) EXCEPTIONS.—

(aa) OVER-SNOW VEHICLES.—Except as provided in item (bb), the use of over-snow vehicles shall not be permitted in the Double Top Recreation Management Area designated by subsection (a)(1).

(bb) ADMINISTRATIVE USE.—Nothing in this section limits the use of off-highway vehicles in the Double Top Recreation Management Area designated by subsection (a)(1) as necessary for administrative purposes or to respond to an emergency (including as appropriate for administrative support and emergency response during the Grand Traverse skiing event, as permitted by the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests).

(ii) HORSE RANCH PARK.—

(I) VEHICLE USE.—

(aa) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in item (bb), the use of off-highway vehicles in the Horse Ranch Park Recreation Management Area designated by subsection (a)(2) is prohibited.

(bb) EXCEPTIONS.—The Secretary may permit the use of over-snow vehicles in the Horse Ranch Park Recreation Management Area designated by subsection (a)(2)—

(AA) only on roads, trails, and areas designated for the use on the

date of enactment of this Act; or

(BB) as needed for administrative purposes or to respond to an emergency.

(II) BICYCLES.—The Secretary may permit the use of bicycles in the Horse Ranch Park Recreation Management Area designated by subsection (a)(2) only—

(aa) on roads, trails, and areas designated for the use on the date of enactment of this Act;

(bb) as needed for administrative purposes;

(cc) to respond to an emergency; or

(dd) if designated by the Secretary for the use on the potential trails described in subclause (III).

(III) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this section affects the potential development, in accordance with applicable law, of the proposed trail commonly known as the “Crested Butte to Paonia Trail”, the proposed trail commonly known as the “Crested Butte to Carbondale Trail”, or the proposed trail commonly known as the “Dark Canyon Loop Trail”, in the Horse Ranch Park Recreation Management Area designated by subsection (a)(2).

SEC. 7. DESIGNATION OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND EDUCATION AREA.

(a) Designation.—Subject to valid existing rights, certain Federal land managed by the Forest Service comprising approximately 12,250 acres, as generally depicted as “Rocky Mountain Scientific Research and Education Area” on the map entitled “Sheet 3: Kebler and Schofield Pass” and dated August 27, 2024, is designated as the “Rocky Mountain Scientific Research and Education Area”.

(b) Purposes.—The purposes of the Scientific Research and Education Area are—

(1) to encourage and preserve conditions necessary for ecological, evolutionary, geological, biogeochemical, climatological, biological, meteorological, and other natural science research and education;

(2) to provide opportunities for the use of continually emerging techniques and methodologies in the conduct of the research and education described in paragraph (1); and

(3) to conserve, protect, and enhance for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations the natural, scenic, scientific, cultural, watershed, recreation, and wildlife resources of the Scientific Research and Education Area.

(c) Management.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall manage the Scientific Research and Education Area in a manner that—

(A) furthers the purposes of the Scientific Research and Education Area described in subsection (b); and

(B) is in accordance with—

(i) this Act; and

(ii) other applicable laws.

(2) USES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall only allow uses of the Scientific Research and Education Area that the Secretary determines would further the purposes described in subsection (b).

(B) VEHICLE USE.—Except as needed for administrative purposes or to respond to an emergency, the use of off-highway vehicles in the Scientific Research and Education Area shall be permitted only on roads designated for the use on the date of enactment of this Act.

(C) BICYCLES.—The use of bicycles in the Scientific Research and Education Area shall be permitted only—

(i) on roads and trails designated for the use by the Secretary on the date of enactment of this Act; or

(ii) on trails designated for the use by the Secretary after the date of enactment of this Act if the Secretary determines that the use is consistent with the purposes described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (b).

(d) Effect.—Nothing in this section limits the authority of the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory to conduct scientific research or education activities inside or outside the boundaries of the Scientific Research and Education Area.

SEC. 8. DESIGNATION OF WILDERNESS.

(a) Designation.—Section 2(a) of the Colorado Wilderness Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1132 note; 107 Stat. 756; 114 Stat. 1955; 116 Stat. 1055; 128 Stat. 3823) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (6), by striking “1993,” and inserting “1993, and approximately 2,096 acres, as generally depicted as ‘Crystal Creek Wilderness Addition’ and ‘Lottis Creek Wilderness Addition’ on the map entitled ‘Sheet 4: Brush Creek, Cement Creek, and Spring Creek’ and dated August 27, 2024,”;

(2) in paragraph (9)—

(A) by striking “Gunnison” and inserting “Gunnison and White River”; and

(B) by striking “1993,” and inserting “1993, and approximately 11,780 acres, as generally depicted as ‘Poverty Gulch Wilderness Addition’, ‘Treasure Wilderness Addition’, and ‘Erickson Springs Wilderness Addition’ on the map entitled ‘Sheet 3: Kebler and Schofield Pass’ and dated August, 27, 2024,”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(23) MATCHLESS WILDERNESS.—Certain Federal land in the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests comprising approximately 8,656 acres, as generally depicted as ‘Matchless Wilderness’ on the map entitled ‘Sheet 4: Brush Creek, Cement Creek, and Spring Creek’ and dated August, 27, 2024, which shall be known as the ‘Matchless Wilderness’.

“(24) EAST CEMENT WILDERNESS.—Certain Federal land in the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests comprising approximately 7,684 acres, as generally depicted as ‘East Cement Wilderness’ on the map entitled ‘Sheet 4: Brush Creek, Cement Creek, and Spring Creek’ and dated August 27, 2024, which shall be known as the ‘East Cement Wilderness’.

“(25) STAR PEAK WILDERNESS.—Certain Federal land in the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, Gunnison, and the White River National Forests comprising approximately 7,210 acres, as generally depicted as ‘Star Peak Wilderness’ on the map entitled ‘Sheet 4: Brush Creek, Cement Creek, and Spring Creek’ and dated August 27, 2024, which shall be known as the ‘Star Peak Wilderness’.

“(26) MAROON BELLS-SNOWMASS WILDERNESS ADDITION.—Certain Federal land in the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests comprising approximately 3,321 acres, as generally depicted as ‘Deer Creek Wilderness Addition’ and ‘Ashcroft Wilderness Addition’ on the map entitled ‘Sheet 4: Brush Creek, Cement Creek, and Spring Creek’ and dated August 27, 2024, which shall be incorporated in, and managed as part of, the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness.

“(27) WEST ELK WILDERNESS ADDITION.—Certain Federal land in the Gunnison Field Office administered by the Bureau of Land Management, in the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests and in the Curecanti National Recreation Area, comprising approximately 58,603 acres, as generally depicted as ‘Lamborn Wilderness Addition’, ‘Castle Wilderness Addition’, ‘Beaver Wilderness Addition’, ‘Steuben Creek Wilderness Addition’, ‘East Elk Creek Wilderness Addition’, ‘Dillon Mesa Wilderness Addition’, ‘Soap Creek Wilderness Addition’, and ‘Curecanti Wilderness Addition’ on the map entitled ‘Sheet 7: West Elk Additions’ and dated August 27, 2024, which shall be incorporated in, and managed as part of, the West Elk Wilderness.

“(28) UNCOMPAHGRE WILDERNESS ADDITIONS.—Certain Federal land in the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests comprising approximately 13,948 acres, as generally depicted as ‘Uncompahgre Wilderness Additions’ on the map entitled ‘Sheet 10: Uncompahgre Additions’ and dated August 27, 2024, which shall be incorporated in, and managed as part of, the Uncompahgre Wilderness.

“(29) POWDERHORN WILDERNESS ADDITION.—Certain Federal land in the Gunnison Field Office administered by the Bureau of Land Management comprising approximately 9,604 acres, as generally depicted as ‘Powderhorn Wilderness Addition’ on the map entitled ‘Sheet 11: Lake Fork’ and dated August 27, 2024, which shall be incorporated in, and managed as part of, the Powderhorn Wilderness.”.

(b) Applicable Law.—Any reference in the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.) or the Colorado Wilderness Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1132 note; Public Law 103–77) to the effective date of that Act shall be considered to be a reference to the date of enactment of this Act for purposes of administering the wilderness areas.

(c) Fire, Insects, and Diseases.—In accordance with section 4(d)(1) of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1133(d)(1)), the Secretary may carry out any measure within the wilderness areas that the Secretary determines to be necessary to control fire, insects, and diseases, subject to any terms and conditions that the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

(d) West Elk Wilderness Boundary Modification.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The boundary of the West Elk Wilderness in the County is modified to exclude the approximately 15 acres generally depicted as “West Elk Wilderness Boundary Pullback” on the map entitled “Sheet 3: Kebler and Schofield Pass” and dated August 27, 2024.

(2) WITHDRAWAL.—Subject to valid existing rights, the Federal land excluded from the boundary of the West Elk Wilderness under paragraph (1) is withdrawn from—

(A) entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws;

(B) location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and

(C) operation of the mineral leasing, mineral materials, and geothermal leasing laws.

(e) Release.—Congress finds that, for the purposes of subsection (c) of section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1782), the land within the Powderhorn Wilderness Study Area not designated as wilderness by this section (or an amendment made by this section)—

(1) has been adequately studied for wilderness designation; and

(2) is no longer subject to that subsection.

SEC. 9. NORTH FORK VALLEY WATERSHED.

(a) Withdrawal.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to valid existing rights, the Federal land in Delta County, Colorado, as generally depicted as “Oil and Gas Withdrawal” on the map entitled “Sheet 6: North Fork Valley” and dated August 27, 2024, is withdrawn from operation of the mineral leasing laws with respect to oil and gas.

(2) EFFECT.—Nothing in paragraph (1) prevents the Secretary of the Interior from authorizing the use or destruction of methane gas that would leak or be vented into the atmosphere from—

(A) an active or inactive coal mine subject to a Federal coal lease; or

(B) an abandoned underground coal mine or the site of a former coal mine—

(i) that is not subject to a Federal coal lease; and

(ii) with respect to which the Federal interest in land includes mineral rights to the methane gas.

(b) No Surface Occupancy Restriction.—Subject to valid existing rights, the Federal land in Delta County, Colorado, as generally depicted as “Oil and Gas No Surface Occupancy” on the map entitled “Sheet 1: Electric Mountain” and dated August 27, 2024, shall be subject to a no surface occupancy restriction with respect to oil and gas exploration, development, production, and distribution.

(c) Gunnison River Motorized Boats and Boat Ramp Use.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the limitation on transfer in the Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area Approved Resource Management Plan dated November 2004, the Secretary of the Interior, in accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.) and subject to paragraph (2) and such terms and conditions as the Secretary of the Interior may require, may transfer the special recreation use permit for the use of motorized boats

within the Gunnison Gorge Wilderness Area, if the use was established before the date of designation of the Gunnison Gorge Wilderness Area.

(2) BOAT RAMP.—The Secretary of the Interior may only transfer the special recreation use permit described in paragraph (1) under that paragraph if the Secretary of the Interior determines that—

(A) the right of the public to the permanent and reasonable use of the boat ramp for the Gunnison River at the Gunnison Forks Day Use Area in Delta County, Colorado, has been acquired by a Federal agency or a State or local government; and

(B) any fees to be charged by the Federal agency or the State or local government for public use of the boat ramp described in subparagraph (A) would be reasonable.

SEC. 10. LAND TO BE HELD IN TRUST FOR THE UTE MOUNTAIN UTE TRIBE.

(a) Trust.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act and subject to valid existing rights, on request by the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe (referred to in this section as the “Tribe”), the Secretary of the Interior shall take into trust for the benefit of the Tribe the approximately 19,080 acres of land in the County, owned in fee by the Tribe, as generally depicted on the map entitled “Ute Mountain Ute Tribe; Pinecrest Ranch—Fee to Trust Legislation” and dated September 20, 2024.

(2) ADMINISTRATION.—The land taken into trust by paragraph (1) shall—

(A) be part of the reservation of the Tribe; and

(B) be administered in accordance with the laws and regulations generally applicable to property held in trust by the United States for the benefit of an Indian Tribe.

(3) RESTRICTION ON USE FOR GAMING ACTIVITIES.—The land taken into trust by paragraph (1) shall not be eligible for, or considered to have been taken into trust for, any gaming activity under any Federal law, including the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (25 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.) and regulations promulgated by the Secretary of the Interior or the National Indian Gaming Commission under that Act.

(b) Survey.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, if any land is taken into trust under subsection (a), the Secretary of the Interior shall complete a survey to establish the boundaries of the land taken into trust under that subsection.

(c) Effect.—Nothing in this section shall affect the rights, title, interests, or jurisdiction of the County in County Road 25 or its right-of-way.

SEC. 11. GENERAL PROVISIONS.

(a) Maps and Legal Descriptions.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall file a map and a legal description of the covered areas and wilderness areas with—

(A) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives.

(2) FORCE OF LAW.—Each map and legal description filed under paragraph (1) shall have the same force and effect as if included in this Act, except that the Secretary may correct any typographical errors in the maps and legal descriptions.

(3) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—Each map and legal description filed under paragraph (1) shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the Bureau of Land Management or the Forest Service, as applicable.

(b) Acquisition of Land.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may acquire any land or interest in land within a covered area or wilderness area only through exchange, donation, or purchase from a willing seller.

(2) MANAGEMENT.—Any land or interest in land acquired under paragraph (1) shall be incorporated in, and administered as a part of, the covered area or wilderness area in which the land or interest in land is located.

(c) Withdrawal.—Subject to valid existing rights, the covered areas and wilderness areas are withdrawn from—

- (1) all forms of entry, appropriation, and disposal under the public land laws;
- (2) location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and
- (3) operation of the mineral leasing, mining materials, and geothermal leasing laws.

(d) Fish and Wildlife.—Nothing in this Act affects the jurisdiction or responsibility of the State with respect to fish and wildlife in the State.

(e) Grazing.—The laws (including regulations) and policies followed by the Secretary in issuing and administering grazing permits or leases on land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary shall continue to apply within a covered area.

(f) Wildfire, Insect, and Disease Management.—In accordance with this Act, the Secretary may—

- (1) carry out any measures that the Secretary determines to be necessary to manage wildland fire, and treat hazardous fuels, insects, and diseases, in the covered areas; and
- (2) coordinate the measures with the appropriate State or local agency, as the Secretary determines to be necessary.

(g) Vegetation Management.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—No project shall be carried out in a covered area for the purpose of harvesting commercial timber.

(2) ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION.—Any vegetation management project carried out in a covered area outside of the wildland-urban interface that includes the harvest or sale of merchantable materials shall—

- (A) be collaboratively developed;
- (B) limit the sale of merchantable materials to small diameter trees or biomass; and
- (C) in accordance with the best available science—

- (i) restore ecological integrity;
- (ii) maximize the retention of old growth and large trees, as appropriate for the forest type; and
- (iii) focus on prescribed fire as the primary means to achieve modified wildland fire behavior, as measured by the projected reduction of uncharacteristically severe wildfire effects for the forest type.

(h) Roads and Trails.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), no road shall be constructed in a covered area.

(2) EXCEPTION.—Nothing in paragraph (1) prevents the Secretary from—

(A) constructing a temporary road in a Protection Area, Recreation Management Area, or Special Management Area as the Secretary determines to be necessary as a minimum requirement for carrying out a vegetation management project in accordance with this Act;

(B) responding to an emergency; or

(C) authorizing the transportation of scientific research equipment within the Scientific Research and Education Area.

(3) DECOMMISSIONING OF TEMPORARY ROADS.—Not later than 3 years after the date on which an applicable vegetation management project is completed, the Secretary shall decommission any temporary road constructed under paragraph (2)(A) for the applicable vegetation management project.

(4) REROUTING.—Nothing in this Act prevents the Secretary from rerouting a trail within a covered area to protect public safety or natural resources from degradation, as determined to be appropriate by the Secretary.

(i) Water Rights.—Nothing in this Act affects the use or allocation of any absolute or conditional water right that is—

(1) decreed under the laws of the State; and

(2) in existence on the date of enactment of this Act.

(j) No Buffer Zones.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this Act establishes a protective perimeter or buffer zone around a covered area or wilderness area.

(2) OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES.—The fact that a non-wilderness activity or use on land outside of a covered area or wilderness area can be seen or heard from an area within a covered area or wilderness area shall not preclude the conduct of the activity or use outside the boundary of the covered area or wilderness area.

(k) Seasonal Closures.—As appropriate and in accordance with applicable law, the Secretary shall develop and implement seasonal closures for off-highway vehicles and bicycles to protect wildlife and wildlife habitat in—

(1) the McIntosh Mountain Special Management Area designated by section 3(a)(4);

(2) the Signal Peak Special Management Area designated by section 3(a)(7);

- (3) the Cabin Creek Wildlife Conservation Area designated by section 4(a)(1);
- (4) the Flat Top Wildlife Conservation Area designated by section 4(a)(2);
- (5) the Lake Gulch and Cebolla Creek Wildlife Conservation Area designated by section 4(a)(3); and
- (6) the Pinnacles Wildlife Conservation Area designated by section 4(a)(6).

(l) Restoration Activities.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—As appropriate and in accordance with applicable law, the Secretary shall conduct wet meadow and riparian restoration projects to improve climate resiliency and wildlife habitat in—

- (A) the McIntosh Mountain Special Management Area designated by section 3(a)(4);
- (B) the Signal Peak Special Management Area designated by section 3(a)(7);
- (C) the Flat Top Wildlife Conservation Area designated by section 4(a)(2);
- (D) the Lake Gulch and Cebolla Creek Wildlife Conservation Area designated by section 4(a)(3);
- (E) the Pinnacles Wildlife Conservation Area designated by section 4(a)(6); and
- (F) the Sawtooth Wildlife Conservation Area designated by section 4(a)(8).

(2) COLLABORATION.—In carrying out the projects described in paragraph (1), the Secretary shall seek to collaborate with—

- (A) the Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife;
- (B) the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District;
- (C) the County;
- (D) in the case of a project located in the Sawtooth Wildlife Conservation Area designated by section 4(a)(8), Saguache County, Colorado;
- (E) the United States Fish and Wildlife Service; and
- (F) other interested entities and individuals.

(m) Tribal Rights and Uses.—

(1) TREATY RIGHTS.—Nothing in this Act affects the treaty rights of any Indian Tribe.

(2) TRADITIONAL TRIBAL USES.—Subject to any terms and conditions that the Secretary determines to be necessary and in accordance with applicable law, the Secretary shall allow for the continued use of a covered area or wilderness area by members of Indian Tribes—

- (A) for traditional ceremonies; and
- (B) as a source of traditional plants and other materials.