



## COLORADO OUTDOOR RECREATION & ECONOMY ACT

### Support for the Colorado Outdoor Recreation & Economy Act

"I am thrilled to join Senator Bennet and Congressman Neguse in support of the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act. As a Congressman, I was proud to champion the Continental Divide Recreation, Wilderness and Camp Hale Legacy Act with Senator Bennet. Today's CORE Act integrates the legislation into a robust public lands package that will protect the Colorado economy and preserve the Colorado environment for generations to come." - **Colorado Governor Jared Polis**

"Summit County is very excited for the new CORE Act, of which the Continental Divide Recreation, Wilderness & Camp Hale Legacy Act is an integral part. We thank Senator Bennet and Congressman Neguse for their leadership in this new effort to protect our public lands. Our public lands and Wilderness areas help define Summit County and drive our recreation economy. We have waited too long for these public lands bills to pass and we urge the rest of Colorado's congressional delegation to get behind this important legislation that will safeguard our public lands in a balanced way." - **Karn Stiegelmeier, Summit County Commissioner**

"These public lands bill are a culmination of years of local collaborative input. The areas protected are a combination of cherished landscapes, wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities and we have a duty to preserve them for future generations. We appreciate Senator Bennet's active role in working with our communities to build these public lands bills and assemble the new CORE Act with Congressman Neguse. I hope that our other representatives in Washington will support the economic and environmental benefits of these bill and add their names to this truly Colorado bill." - **Hilary Cooper, San Miguel County Commissioner**

“We have long waited for and actively pursued opportunities to protect public lands in numerous areas throughout Gunnison County. These public lands have been the backbone of our communities livelihoods and when well managed and sensibly protected, they will be an enduring wellspring of opportunity into the future. From the largest living organism in Colorado, the Kebler Pass Aspen Grove, to the nation’s largest kokanee salmon fishery anchored by Blue Mesa Reservoir we are happy to see these areas have the opportunity for protections that match our communities values and will continue to be a treasure for locals and visitors alike well into the future. Gunnison County applauds introduction the CORE Act and this package of conservation efforts.” - **Jonathan D. Houck, Gunnison County Commissioner**

“After serving as a sniper in combat in Iraq I returned to my home in the Rocky Mountains. I instinctively headed to the great outdoors and the amazing public lands in the west. I found that the desire to explore drove me to recover from physical injuries and the serenity of the natural world helped heal my war trauma. The lands of the free I swore to defend saved my life. It does generations of veterans an honor to protect Camp Hale the home of the 10th Mountain Division. It does every American a service to preserve more of the iconic Rocky Mountains to provide places to enrich our lives through recreation and recuperation.” - **Garett Reppenhagen, U.S. Army Iraqi Freedom Veteran & Rocky Mountain Director of Vet Voice Foundation**

“The customers who use our packs take them to wild public lands for adventures of all kinds. We strongly support the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act to protect the very land that our business is tailored to.” - **Layne Rigney, President of Osprey Packs Inc.**

“I’ve lived in Colorado high country and know the value of Colorado’s public lands first hand. The areas in Sen. Bennet’s Colorado Outdoor Recreation & Economy (CORE) Act will bring more opportunities for exploration, recreation and all the related community and health benefits to the people of Colorado. We’re thankful for Sen. Bennet and his leadership in working with Coloradans on the CORE act.” - **Travis Campbell, Vice President, General Manager for the Americas of The North Face**

"Protecting our winter landscapes is critical to Colorado's growing outdoor recreation economy. In particular, recognizing and preserving the incredible skiing history and legacy at the Camp Hale National Historic Landscape is especially important. Our industry appreciates the leadership of Sen. Bennet and Rep. Neguse keeping our public lands accessible and wild."  
- **Annelise Loevlie, CEO of Icelantic Skis**

The CORE Act is a Colorado-grown piece of legislation that has something in it for everyone. From the Continental Divide to the Thompson Divide, the novel approach Senator Bennet is taking with this bill prioritizes important landscape level conservation efforts that Colorado sportsmen and women have backed for over a decade. Locally developed wilderness proposals in the San Juans have been advanced with the support of local communities and hunters and anglers only to slip through the cracks of politically distracted congress after congress. I tip my hat to Senator Bennet for building a new approach that will ensure that those iconic mountains remain one of the very best places to hunting and fish in the state. Focusing energy on a comprehensive bill that benefits fish and wildlife habitat, protects water resources, enhances access for hunting and fishing and highlights Colorado's model outdoor economy is a powerful way to bring people together to show the rest of the country how Coloradans work together to set aside partisan political interests for the benefit of the wild public lands, waters and wildlife that belong to all of us. - **John Gale, Conservation Director of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers**

"For years, Trout Unlimited has fought to protect these important public lands on behalf of Colorado's sportsmen and women, so we are very excited to see Sen. Bennet and Rep. Neguse introduce legislation that shares our commitment to honoring the values of hunters and anglers. From the prime big game habitat and unique native cutthroat trout fisheries of the Thompson Divide to the pristine headwaters of the San Juan Mountains, the four bills that comprise the CORE Act will go a long way toward advancing Colorado's sporting heritage and fueling our outdoor recreation economy."- **David Nickum, Executive Director of Colorado Trout Unlimited**

"Colorado is known for its culturally-rich and inspirational places, and for its residents who will fight to protect and enhance these places. Curecanti National Recreation Area is no exception. This landscape deserves official recognition within the National Park System, managed by its dedicated staff, and celebrated for the significant benefit it brings to the local economy. We applaud Sen. Bennet for introducing the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act." - **Tracy Coppola, Colorado Program Manager for the National Parks Conservation Association**

"Over the last few years working on the San Juan Mountains Wilderness Act, I've noted the many places around the country where images of these dramatically beautiful and inspiring public lands are displayed. The entire country sees the San Juan Mountains, from the State Supreme Court, to the Colorado State drivers' license and the backdrop to the Denver news channels, to many state and federal offices. While I am I lucky enough to see these lands in person every day, these priceless and irreplaceable landscapes need the protection of Wilderness status so that future generations will have that same opportunity. Ouray County sends a huge thank you to Senator Bennet for his vision in bringing the CORE Act forward." - **Ben Tisdell, Ouray County Commissioner**

“Our local economy depends on outdoor recreation and protected lands. That’s why we’ve supported protecting the San Juan Mountains for a decade, and support the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act.” - **San Juan County Commissioner Pete McKay**

“We applaud the CORE Act for balancing the needs of wildlife and watershed protection with recreational and other uses of the forest. This collaborative legislative process has involved our water providers, conservation groups, recreational groups, and businesses. The Camp Hale National Historic Landscape especially helps to preserve and highlight an incredible piece of history and the legacy of the Tenth Mountain Division in Eagle County.” - **Kathy Chandler Henry, Eagle County Commissioner**

"Pitkin County has long supported legislation to permanently protect the Thompson Divide’s unique landscape. Our community is dependent on the ranching and recreation economy that our public land creates and we support Senator Bennet and Congressman Neguse’s new CORE Act to protect unique places like Thompson Divide that drive that economy. We have waited too long for these bills to pass and we urge Congress to pass the CORE Act in the months ahead.” - **Pitkin County Commission Chair Greg Poschman**

“We’re grateful to Senator Bennet for respecting our community’s long standing commitment to protecting the San Juan Mountains through the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act. Telluride is a recreation hub - we depend on these lands for our very existence.” - **Telluride Mayor Sean Murphy**

“Ridgway is ideally situated at the foot of the San Juans, within close proximity to all types of outdoor recreation, which our public lands obviously offer in abundance. As a result, those uses are playing a rapidly increasing role in our economic development strategies. That's why we've long supported the protection of our public lands, and thank Senator Bennet for sponsoring the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act.” - **Ridgway Mayor John Clark**

“In the history of this country, the majority of people believed that preserving land and creating wilderness was essential for healthy communities. The Wilderness Act of 1964 passed by a vote of 78 to 12," "As westerners we are rich in public lands, mountains, rivers, wildlife and wilderness. The town of Ophir is an historic western town. Today it is a true mountain town. People visit us to ski and hike and enjoy the unbelievable mountain vistas. The community of Ophir has worked tirelessly to preserve the health of the forests and rivers that surround us. The Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act furthers those protections and respects our community’s desire to appropriately manage motorized recreation and maintain our history of quiet, healthy and safe forest lands.” - **Ophir Mayor Corinne Platt.**

"We thank Senator Bennet for his strong leadership in introducing the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act to Congress. In our area, the lands included for permanent protection include all those in the previously introduced San Juan Mountains Wilderness Bill. In the decade since the bill was first introduced, its boundaries and delineations have been refined to ensure that existing uses are still allowed, while critical areas are protected." - **Lexi Tuddenham, Executive Director of Sheep Mountain Alliance**

"The CORE Act continues a proud Colorado tradition of protecting our wild lands, clean water and outdoor recreation opportunities for future generations. This legislation would protect some of the best that Colorado's public lands have to offer, including pristine watersheds and key wildlife habitat along the Continental Divide, three popular fourteeners, and the rugged mountains and ranching heritage of the Thompson Divide. The CORE Act has something for everyone and all Coloradans stand to benefit. We are thankful for the leadership from Senator Bennet and Representative Neguse in writing the next chapter of Colorado's proud history of supporting wilderness and public lands." - **Jim Ramey, Colorado State Director of The Wilderness Society**

"Coloradans love our lands and this is a once-in-a-generation opportunity that Senator Bennet and Representative Neguse have put together -- protecting some of Colorado's most popular, iconic and historic public lands and widely supported by locals. We urge the entire Colorado delegation to listen to Coloradans and pass the CORE Act in this Congress." - **Kelly Nordini, Executive Director of Conservation Colorado**

"As a business owner my retail business and employees rely on the people who come to our area to access wild and natural areas. Enhancing and adding additional wild places is good business. Outdoor recreation generates billions of dollars annually in Colorado. This spending supports thousands of jobs and their related wages and salaries. As a business owner I support this new legislation. But, and just as important, I personally desire the protection of additional lands. People, wildlife, flora, and our water need wild places in order to survive and thrive. In an ever increasing crowded and busy world people need a place to find refuge that is free of modern day distractions. As human beings, more than ever, we need the ability to connect with nature. Most of us only have but a few chances to truly help future generations. Protecting our wild places is that chance." - **Tom Mullen, small business owner in Vail**

## **Support for the Continental Divide Recreation, Wilderness, and Camp Hale Legacy Act**

“Designating Camp Hale will pay homage to our veterans and the birth of our state’s booming outdoor industry. I want to thank Representative Neguse and Senator Bennet for honoring World War II veterans, small business owners, and the lands that we all enjoy.” - **Bradley Noone, a U.S. Army 10th Mountain Division Veteran**

“Preserving our public lands like the Continental Divide and Camp Hale is about as American as you can get. You leave your politics behind when you walk into a wilderness area, race down a mountain side, or hunt your first elk. I urge Senator Gardner to protect our Western values and way of life and support the CORE Act.”

- **Dave Gorsuch, a fourth-generation Coloradan, rancher and businessman**

“Protected public lands help provide clean water and safeguard such lands from future development. Clean water is essential for the healthy fisheries that our guests from all over need to enjoy the outdoors.” - **Joe Macy, Eagle County Resident and Retired Fishing Guide**

## Support for the Thompson Divide Withdrawal and Protection Act

“I am a rancher who has relied on the high-quality summer grazing in the Thompson Divide for 45 years. Protecting these public lands is critical not only to me and my fellow ranchers but to the entire community. Recreation and hunting are also vitally important to our local economy. There are just some areas where the costs to the community outweigh the potential benefits of drilling. The Thompson Divide is one of those places. I thank Senator Bennet for his continued leadership to get this bill passed in Congress eliminating the threat of oil and gas drilling in the Thompson Divide thereby safeguarding the continued prosperity of our community.” - **Bill Fales, a local rancher in the Thompson Divide area**

“Never before have I seen an issue so galvanizing for a community. Protecting our backyard, our watershed and for some their livelihood, has built an uncommonly broad coalition of land stewards. We welcome and appreciate Senator Bennet’s efforts to protect Thompson Divide not only for us but for future generations.” - **Dan Richardson, Mayor of Carbondale**

“As a fifth generation resident of the Crystal River Valley I know that the Thompson Divide area is a place that is too special to drill for oil and gas. Coal mining was once the lifeblood of our community, and we've worked hard to emerge from the boom and bust cycle of extractive industries to build a sustainable economy based on agriculture, tourism, and outdoor recreation. Our collective efforts and unified voice has repeatedly come together to protect this special landscape and we thank Senator Bennet for his decade-long dedication to ensure this landscape is protected for future generations of ranchers, sportsmen, and recreational users.” - **Stacey Bernot, Former Mayor of Carbondale**

"We support this legislative compromise because it addresses our concerns over continued access to areas we need in order to continue production from our existing leases. This bill does that by balancing energy needs with the wishes of the community to keep some areas undeveloped along Thompson Divide and Kebler Pass. We are also excited and encouraged over the new provisions in this bill that will promote the capture of energy from methane leaks into the atmosphere from old coal mining areas. These provisions will help bring jobs and economic growth to the North Fork Valley and also help the environment.' - **Brad Robinson, President of Gunnison Energy**

## Support for the San Juan Mountains Wilderness Act

“The spectacularly rugged and pristine San Juan Mountains are an American treasure that are worthy of preservation. A public lands designation in the San Juan Wilderness bill will protect this unique and beautiful environment while ensuring recreational access that is core to the regional economy. I urge Senator Gardner to join Senator Bennet as a co-sponsor of this Wilderness bill to demonstrate solidarity within the Colorado delegation to preserve this iconic Southwest Colorado asset for future generations.” - **Bill Jensen, Chief Executive Officer of Telluride Ski & Golf**

“San Miguel Bike Alliance supports the proposed San Juan Wilderness bill. In particular, we are pleased that this bill allows land managers to approve future uses in the Sheep Mountain Special Management area. We will continue advocating for better trails and given the nature of our steep terrain there is a limited amount of viable public land. Thankfully, this bill acknowledges that potential with special management areas that complement the proposed wilderness expansion. Our region relies on our natural surroundings for myriad quality of life benefits and expanding the boundaries of protected land benefits us all.” - **Max Cooper, San Miguel Bike Alliance President**

“At Helitrax, we’re not just selling powder, we’re selling wilderness too. Our clients intuitively know these as wild places, and while we ski outside of designated and proposed wilderness, it’s what they look out at—the reason they keep coming back. The root experience of solitude, of wilderness is one that unites us, and the land composition we see here—2% density, and 98% wild—informs our place, our lives, the attitudes and culture that we pass down.” - **Drew Ludwig, Helitrax Guide, artist, and local entrepreneur**

“Wilderness is more vital than ever to me, as my life as a small business owner is hectic 24/7. I have been hiking, skiing and hunting in the area encompassed by the San Juan Wilderness Bill for close to 20 years and find solace, challenges and incredible natural beauty in its alpine environment. The value of having contiguous wild places in a world that is increasingly busy is immeasurable.” - **Todd Rutledge, Mountain Trip Guide**

“Our wild lands are an asset to this community. As a small business owner in Norwood I rely on visitors to this region who come for our beautiful mountains, rivers and scenic mesas. Protecting public land is essential for the growth and success of our local tourism based economy. The proposed San Juan Mountains Wilderness Act not only protects natural beauty it protects and strengthens the existing small business community I am a grateful to be part of.” - **Hannah Rossman, Founder and Owner of Blue Grouse Bread in Norwood**

"As a passionate hunter, I know first hand how incredibly important roadless habitat is to wildlife, especially our region's elk herd. This year I harvested an elk from the proposed Liberty Bell Addition that will provide my family with a year of great tasting meat, and I hope to be able to continue to do so for many years to come thanks to the protections provided by the San Juan Mountains Wilderness Bill. Many of my favorite hunting areas are within the proposed boundaries of this bill and that's a major reason why I wholeheartedly support it." - **Jesse Dudley, San Miguel County hunter**

## Support for the Curecanti National Recreation Area Boundary Establishment Act

“This legislation is a three-way win,” “By finishing up important boundary legislation, three cooperating agencies will gain operational efficiency, while the visiting public will be assured of terrific recreational opportunities for the foreseeable future. While The National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management and the US Forest Service have cooperatively managed the boundary of Curecanti NRA in the past, this overdue legislation will ease many awkward boundary issues for the agencies and help protect the natural and cultural resources of the area for the visiting public. It has been my personal experience that there is widespread support for this legislation. Let’s cross the “t’s” and dot the “i’s” to finish business intended many years ago when managing the recreational aspect of Curecanti was transferred from the Bureau of Reclamation to the National Park Service. I thank Senator Bennet for his leadership to get this important legislation moving forward in Congress.” - **Connie Rudd, retired Curecanti National Recreation Area Superintendent**

“The Curecanti Bill is an important piece of legislation that both formalizes a prized National Recreation Area and memorializes the Bureau of Reclamation responsibilities to provide 26 miles of public fishing access on the Gunnison River upstream of the Aspinall Unit as mitigation for the development of Blue Mesa Reservoir. This is an incredible public lands amenity for sportsmen and outdoor recreationalists throughout the nation” - **John Messner, Gunnison County Commissioner**

“The Curecanti National Recreation Area hosts nearly one million visitors annually and is a vital part of the recreational economy in the Gunnison Basin. We laud Senator Bennet’s efforts in sponsoring legislation that will establish boundaries for the Area and protect it in perpetuity. Curecanti NRA includes Blue Mesa Reservoir, the largest reservoir in Colorado and the water resources and recreational amenities provided by Blue Mesa Reservoir are vital to our state. Thank you Senator Bennet for introducing legislation that will protect this important resource.” - **Frank Kugel, General Manager of Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District**