

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/5/2021 7:00:00 AM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Good afternoon, I am writing as a concerned Palmer Lake citizen in regards to the potential for authorization of shooting in the Pike National Forest near the Palmer Lake reservoirs. I personally come from a family of hunters. My dad has been hunting for over 50 years and has been a long term NRA member, but even he has been horrified by the amount of shooters in the forests near camp grounds these days shooting irresponsibly, at all hours of the night and day (often times with drinking involved). My family tried multiple times to camp in other forests in Colorado where shooting was allowed and it was terrible. There were people shooting directly into the forest (not into a hill, not in a designated shooting area) probably thinking that no one was there, but there was no guarantee of that (especially in a populated camping/hiking area). We wanted to approach these people, but were frankly scared to. Because of this we have given up on car camping. The Forest Service is underfunded and understaffed, they do not have the ability to continually oversee and supervise the shooting in these areas, and it's not safe for citizens to do so. There are indoor and outdoor shooting ranges in our area that are supervised, monitored and safe and there is no reason (unless someone is hunting during hunting season and has a permit) that someone should be allowed to freely shoot guns off in an area that is highly populated (more so every year) by hikers and backpackers.

Please know that I am not against guns. Perhaps a better idea would be to use Colorado Lottery funds to create a safe outdoor alternative for people who wish to responsibly use them in an outdoor setting - something specifically designed for gun owners. Just a thought.

I also believe that we need to keep vehicles out of our watershed area. There are plenty of well groomed, safe hiking trails that are available to all those who wish to fish, hike and camp in the area. So there is plenty of access for all. Allowing vehicles in would open up a quiet, beautiful, clean watershed area to all forms of motor vehicles (cars/trucks, motorcycles, ATVs etc.) - that could potentially tear up the roads, discharge who knows what into the waterways, and greatly disturb the peace that so many come to the reservoirs seeking.

Thank you for reading this far. I greatly appreciate you taking the time to read my email and ask for my words to be considered.