

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 5/9/2024 8:48:32 PM

First name: Stephen

Last name: Hart

Organization:

Title:

Comments: The Sweetwater Lake Project is an opportunity for USFS and CPW to work together to develop a sustainable public facility in a remote part of the Flattops. A daily limit on numbers of campers, picnickers, fisherman, hikers, and equestrians would aid in preservation of the natural resources that exist currently and aid in return to native conditions of areas impacted by past cattle grazing and equestrian uses. Separate trails should be developed for hikers and equestrians, with no trail use allowed for any wheeled vehicles, including mountain bikes, OHVs, trail bikes, and 4WD vehicles. With the properties proximity to the wilderness area, every effort should be made to connect these new hiking and equestrian trails to the existing wilderness trail system. In addition, the lake should be managed such that only hand-propelled boats, canoes, and kayaks are allowed and rented, reducing, but not eliminating, the need for invasive species inspections.

All of the new structures should use sustainable construction materials and methods, including on-site materials-- timber from beetle-kill trees, recycled barnwood, local stone, on-site gravel, etc. If south-facing roof slopes are practical for new structures, solar panels should be considered to supplement building lighting and ventilation power requirements, particularly for small pit-toilet and larger equestrian structures.

Picnic and camping areas should have gravel parking areas, sustainable wooden picnic tables (NOT steel or concrete), and bear boxes, but NO firepits or grills due to wildfire risk. The campsites should have NO utility hookups, but the campground should be provided with separated water stations and a single RV sewer dump. Each campsite should have the gravel parking area limited to 30' long and 15' wide. Each should include a gravel tent pad, so every site can be used by tent and/or RV campers. Generator use in the campground and picnic area should be strictly limited or prohibited and quiet hours should be strictly enforced. Sweetwater Lake should be managed as the "quietest park in the state system". Campsites should be reservation-only, as are other state parks, but should include payment in full at the time of reservation, with refunds allowed only for cancellation 72 hours in advance of arrival date due to the remote location of the facility.