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Title:

Comments: Sweetwater Lake Recreation Management and Development Project

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1.Sweetwater Lake is one of the best equestrian campsites in the state Colorado. Why ruin this with trying to crowd more campers that do not know how to act around horses? The historic character of the area will change with adding "State Park" to the area. Because it is a state park, fees will increase and what will the horse people get for it; increased risk to their horses, equipment, vehicles, less places for horse recreation, and potentially increased fire dangers, etc.

2.The road into Sweetwater Lake at its best is still bad. I see nothing about upgrading this road with traffic volumes increasing. Think about the locals living along this road. I would think the tube count is between 75-100 cars per day on a yearly average. With what is covered in the plan, you are looking at about 400 cars per day in the summer, plus RV's and other types of vehicles that will ultimately tear up what is already there.

3.Wildlife impacts from increased traffic volumes will increase wildlife encounters, resulting in the maiming or destruction of wildlife, damage to vehicles, and harassment of wildlife. Wildlife deserves a place to keep to raise their young without the increased disturbance of increased traffic. They are obviously okay with the small number of horses, people, backpackers, etc that currently use and enjoy this place.

4.As a forester by education, we are having more problems with wildfires and visitors from the large cities of Colorado and "out of state" people either do not care or do not understand about forest fires as we do. Just because a tree is green or the grass is green does not mean it is able to withstand a spark. Visitors don't always think and that can increase the likelihood of a fire starting. This is an area if made into a state park, lends itself to become a FREE FOR ALL State Park. The people who have lived in the area of Sweetwater Lake really ought to have a big say in this. They probably know the "goings ons" better than most. Their properties, livelihoods, and quiet simple lives are why they live there. Please don't bring the hustle and bustle to the people who have sought to live away from it, enjoy the wildlife, understand what is needed to help in the prevention of wildfires and simply enjoy their lives.

5.Colorado currently has ballot issues, that if passed, will effectively cause some very difficult times for the state departments such as CP&W. To try and list this area as a state park before the election in November could result in a "black eye" for CP&W, especially if you cannot fund it and maintain it as your plans states. Some places, like Sweetwater, are places that are best left as is.

6.This area has been able to serve a unique group of outdoor enthusiasts: backpackers, horses and riders, as well as those who enjoy the solitude of fishing. These enthusiasts may use a vehicle to get there, but otherwise, it is people simply enjoying the beauty and solitude of the area.

7.Just because there is land available for a state park, does not mean it needs to be a state park. Some areas are beautiful and unique in their current condition. Leave this area for the horses and their riders. They ought to be able to have this as a place to call their own. There are lots of dog parks. CP&W could be a great pioneer and keep this as the horse park it currently is. Who knows, this could be the first of several for the horse enthusiasts in our great state and the CP&W would be able to be recognized for their wisdom in helping bring this type of recreation to more parts of the state.