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First name: Janet

Last name: Rivera

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Sweetwater Residents and Friends Vision July 2024

Sweetwater Complex

"Our community loves this land and believes there's tremendous value in preserving not only the land, but also the essence of the property[hellip]The human pull towards Sweetwater Lake, and the value that citizens assign to it, is a combination that's one-part stunning natural beauty, and one-part prideful affection towards that storied cultural heritage of Colorado's rugged Western roots." Steve Carver, Mayor, Town of Gypsum

The Sweetwater Community maintains the sustainable level of visitation to Sweetwater Lake is an average of 60 or less people per day, which is the average review of the last 39 years. This is the number that allows a special and unique experience for a variety of visitors; that promotes the healthy ecosystem which provides a good diversity of flora and fauna, and that supports the culture and safety of the surrounding community.

Our Site Plan

Lodging

Rental Cabins

Unique historic cabins can be remodeled OR six rustic-looking wet cabins can be constructed in the same area after the current houses are removed. This nice area where these old cabins are located can continue the

previous desired lodging amenity. If dry cabins are wanted, they should be added to the camping area, not here, as they are basically camping within wooden walls, a different use category.

Primitive Camping

The area by the current USFS Cabin is a convenient location, close to the central area, with good views, and room for an interesting layout. This is a previously disturbed site that had cattle and horse grazing here for some years. We prefer a simple design and minimal impact and development. We envision a maximum of 12 sites. While no cement pads, shower houses, electric hookups or generators, we would permit small RV's along with tents and car camping. Vault toilets and water pumps should be available while noise and light should be limited. If desired, a few of the 12 sites can contain dry cabins.

Equestrian Camping and Parking

Equestrian camping and parking can be located below the current barn. There should be room for 5 horse camping rigs, vault toilets and water, and some pens for horses along with public parking. It is close to county road easements outside of the main arena yet close to multiple trails. We would include hunter parking, and other public forest use parking such as backpackers and day hikers.

Day Use

Day use - Divided into two areas.

Area One: This is the main day use area near the current restaurant, and should include parking, including some parking for people bringing their own small fishing boat trailers. This is the most heavily historically used part of the property with the least amount of "natural" vegetation. We propose a vault toilet and water pump.

This will include the rental boathouse and a dock for launching small lakecraft (electric trolling motors 5 hp or less allowed). We propose a second fishing dock be added nearer the cabin area

Day uses include fishing, hiking (we hope access to Indian Caves reopens soon), sightseeing, picnicking, lounging, wildlife viewing, etc.

Area Two: This is where the old campground was located. We would like to see picnic tables and fire grates, and perhaps a small dock for fishing access. A vault toilet and water pump.

Outfitter Area

The barn and the closest cabin should be continued as the outfitter complex. Altogether, this should include a barn, office, corrals, staff housing, and guest parking. It is slightly separate from the main area and autonomous. However it is also close to the road, close to the pastures, and close to multiple trails. It is easy access for day horseback and pony rides, and yet still offers half-day, full-day rides, and overnight pack trips into the forest.

Restaurant

We would either like to see the old restaurant restored or a new small restaurant built across the road from the current one where a previous lodge/restaurant burnt down in 1954. This previously disturbed area is close to the water source, has a good view of the lake, yet is far enough from the lake for a good septic system.

The restaurant could include a small store and a few employee housing rooms downstairs.

Additional Necessities

Water treatment

A new water treatment facility should be built where the previous one was located. It is good proximity to the water source

Administrative Area

If the US Forest Service (or Colorado Parks and Wildlife) wants to have a presence near the lake, they should develop a small administrative area in a flat, previously heavily disturbed area (referred to as Dead Horse Flats) across from the barn. It is ideal for small development. It has a good overview of the site and there is plenty of space, yet it is separate from the main day use. We envision maybe one house for employee housing, perhaps with seasonal apartments downstairs, and one maintenance/storage facility, and a maintenance yard area.

Cattle Catchment Area

Cattle operations are welcomed in our valley. The cattle catch pen should be located where cattle tend to wander from the Flattops, near the old campground. They can be rounded up and hauled away from the property.

Additional notes:

This plan keeps the county truck turnaround, welcomes hunters, promotes winter ice fishing, and snowshoeing. All pastures remain as pastures and are not built upon. The previously used USFS trails remain accessible.

Not allowed are mountain bikes on hiking/horse trails. No ATV's. Snowmobiles only allowed for ice fishing access. And dogs must be leashed.

We hope that USFS will make sure that the area is well maintained and cleaned, that trash is removed in a timely manner, and that rangers are on duty for safety and policing. We request good, clear signs leading up to the area, but not posted on private lands.

"It's not only the natural landscape that citizens aimed to protect, but also the human elements that provide a bridge to connect us to the past. Sweetwater Lake is a magical mixture of natural landscapes and rustic western culture that drives meaningful emotional connections to the place for citizens." Steve Carver, Mayor, Town of Gypsum

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Wendy Cogdal

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SALLY SWARTZ

Catherine Beyer

Leigh Seeger

Pam and Larry Dupper

Nicholas Fuenzalida

Scott and Carol Vasina

Jerry & Ruth Butters

Mark and Amy Wilhelm

Chris and Nancy Leverich

Leverich and Carr Real Estate

Lynn Tanno

Cynthia Ebert

Bill Bohannon

Lynn Brown

Yvonne Mooney Babbitt

Dan and Shay Rivera

Chris and Corina Lindley

Rogers Family

Jennifer Raper

Jerry Law

Brian Widhalm

Liz and Ern Mooney

Charlie Wick

Carol G Wick

Joseph T Srholez

Autumn Rivera

Alana Blusol and Arthur Danu

JAMES AND PHYLLIS BOLEN

Chris and Corina Lindley

Jules and Tali Landsman

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