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First name: Erin

Last name: Stege

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Subject: Public Comment on the Sweetwater Lake Draft Environmental Impact Statement

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed development alternatives that would turn Sweetwater Lake into a Colorado State Park or significantly increase development around the lake.

I've been visiting Sweetwater Lake for more than 10 years, and it has become one of my favorite places in Colorado. It's truly a hidden gem. Every time I visit, I'm reminded how rare it is to find a place that is still quiet, peaceful, and feels untouched by overdevelopment. I worry that once those qualities are lost, they can never be brought back. Sweetwater is special because of what it already is-not because of what it could become.

I've also seen firsthand what happens when beautiful mountain lakes become more developed and attract larger crowds. Sylvan Lake State Park is a good example. While I understand it provides recreational opportunities, the increase in visitation has changed the experience. Fishing line and hooks are often left along the shoreline, picnic areas show heavy wear, trash is more common, and the peaceful atmosphere has largely been replaced by crowds. It simply doesn't feel like the pristine mountain lake it once was.

I don't want to see Sweetwater Lake head down that same path.

I'm also concerned about the impact increased development would have on the wildlife that depends on this area. Sweetwater provides important habitat for bald eagles, peregrine falcons, elk, and many other species. More cabins, campgrounds, trails, traffic, and year-round activity will inevitably put more pressure on these animals and the fragile ecosystem they call home.

The single access road and remote location also raise safety concerns. Increasing visitation without carefully considering evacuation and emergency access-especially during wildfire season-doesn't seem like the right approach.

If improvements are necessary, I support keeping them as minimal as possible. Basic maintenance, clean restroom facilities, trash management, and perhaps a very limited number of campsites seem reasonable. However, I do not support a lodge, cabins, extensive new trail systems, or transferring management to Colorado Parks and Wildlife as a state park.

Not every beautiful place needs to be developed to accommodate more visitors. Sweetwater Lake is already public land, and I believe its greatest value is that it remains one of the few places where people can still experience solitude, abundant wildlife, and the natural beauty that has made it so special for decades.

I sincerely hope Sweetwater Lake can remain the quiet, unspoiled place that so many of us have come to treasure.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my comments.