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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I have read the USFS EIS statement. In the "Issues" section, you identify all the concerns that have been expressed by the public about the potential CPW development of this land. I'm not quite sure, why you bothered to do an EIS, if you're going to override all the identified concerns.

Issues in your impact statement as identified:

#### 1.6 Significant Issues

Agricultural Livestock Access

Botany and Invasive Plants

\*\*\*\*Heritage

Hydrology and Water Rights

Recreation

Roadless Access

Scenery

Socioeconomics

\*\*\*Soils and Geology (Recent flash flood and the Derby fire)

Traffic, Parking, and Roads (One way in and out. Unstable hillsides, fire and flash floods)

\*\*\*Wetlands

\*\*\*Wilderness

\*\*\*Wildlife and Aquatics

Air Quality

Your impact report doesn't stop there as you are aware. This is just a sampling of what your proposals will do to a stunning historical piece of Colorado.

I am not a Sweetwater community member, so I have no local stake in this fight except that it pains me to see another quiet special place turned into an over run theme park. I have spent almost 40 years visiting Sweetwater Lake and I am horrified by the proposals you have brought forward.

I have done my due diligence and don't understand how this went from a conservation easement to a land trade? Also, why were the homeowners who were working in good faith with the government and entities only informed of the "State Park" announcement 4-days before the announcement and visit by Governor Polis? Hmmm? I wonder who would like to research that story. The residents of Sweetwater worked with you in good faith, privately raising 1m to preserve this land.

Why not create a place that would provide visitors a true Colorado historical perspective, not one that bulldozes a culture we are losing everyday here in Colorado in the name of "progress" and money. I am a 40 year, Carbondale, CO resident. I was a part of a similar issue when our historical USFS building and 100-year-old tree were bulldozed for a brand-new building, which currently sits EMPTY due to the federal cuts. We are the canary in the current US coal mine that is Sweetwater Lake. As Garfield County Commissioner Perry Will states: "I can sum it up: the proposals there will not benefit wildlife," added Commissioner Perry Will.

Here is my post on FB following my tour of Sweetwater as it exists now:

I was recently invited to join the board of directors of the Roaring Fork Valley Horse Council. I was asked to join Holly McLain and another board member for a trail ride with the outfitters who have been running trail riding and hunting trips at Sweetwater Lake as a family operation since 1975 on leased land, to better understand the

issues related to Sweetwater Recreation Area's recent designation as the 43rd Colorado State Park and potential management by CPW instead of USFS.

As we arrived at this amazing property, I was transported back in time. As a child, my family would take our family vacations to what was then called a "Dude Ranch." I have such fond memories of those trips. When we walked onto the A J Brink Outfitter property, it was as if time had stood still. I was returned to a simpler way of life, when front porches were places to begin and end the day, learning from and sharing with one another. When it didn't matter what side of the aisle you were sitting on, but you found common ground in your love of the outdoors, nature and horses, cookouts and campfires.

As we drove by the flash flood that covered the one-way road into the lake, and later rode horses past the debris and burned brush from the fire line created by our firefighters to prevent the spread of the Derby Fire, I deepened my understanding of the concerns of the community about the current proposal, and the history of the land conservation purchase, and the current CPW "deal."

I wondered how on earth this piece of land was going to sustain a minimum of 200+ people a day.

I wondered why we would tear up beautiful pastureland to accommodate RVs.

I wondered why we needed to tear down historical buildings and put up a new 4,000 sq. ft. welcome center and hotel building?

In a time where life is moving at light speed and data centers are drinking our water, wouldn't it be a more valuable experience for people and families to be a part of something that invites you to disconnect, turn off your screens and walk into a world of beauty and wonder?

I'm not saying there isn't work to be done on the property to bring it to code, etc., but the Feds report reveals ALL the "issues" involved with what they are trying to do to create a state park.

I'll try to upload the report. It's 200+ pages of a read, but you can get to the issues section quickly.

We are losing our traditions, one pasture sell off at a time. We are losing connection to our ranching history, our farming history, and all that comes with that way of life. Let's not ruin yet another piece of Colorado's history in the name of bigger is better and the almighty ??.

Please call Governor Polis, your Eagle and Garfield County representatives. This isn't about Brinks per se for me, although I believe what is happening is an egregious overreach. It's about preserving a way of life that's disappearing from Colorado.

Don't take my word for it, take a day trip and breathe in the fresh air and rest in the silence of the Sweetwater Lake wilderness.

I hope that Sweetwater Lake is left as it is now, a pristine wilderness, that can be accessed by folks who truly enjoy what it means to experience Colorado in a natural state without the bells and whistles of "progress." We've got plenty of State Parks that offer upgraded amenities. Visitors can visit those parks if they need a clean toilet and a place to park their RV and generator.

Sincerely,  
Sheri Gaynor  
Carbondale, CO