



Date: January 8, 2021

To: Colorado Parks & Wildlife Commission  
c/o Commission Assistant  
Colorado Parks and Wildlife  
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Subject: Colorado State Wildlife Area Pass

On behalf of the Colorado Mountain Club, I am submitting comments on the proposed Colorado State Wildlife Area Pass. First, thank you for the opportunity to participate in the SWA stakeholder process. I was pleased to represent a variety of recreation groups in this process however I will note that I was one of only four women in group of more than 20 so I hope that future CPW processes will engage a more diverse set of participants.

I very much appreciate the CPW Commission taking steps to better balance recreation at state wildlife areas and protect the conservation values of these properties however we are still concerned that the proposed pass will not actually address issues like overuse and habitat degradation. The pass is a temporary remedy to implementation issues with the hunting/fishing license requirement but we are eager for the next phase of this process to begin and really look at resolving site-by-site issues surrounding recreation at SWAs. We are also concerned about how the rollout of the new pass will align with other state-wide funding initiatives including the proposed GoWild Pass and hope the Commission will carefully consider the public perception of multiple new public funding proposals from the state. With both of these factors in mind, we would again propose that the CPW Commission **consider an alternative solution to temporarily pause the implementation of the new pass and hunting/fishing license requirement** at State Wildlife Areas until a site-by-site analysis is complete and the GoWild pass program has been fully developed.

If the Commission does decide to move forward with the pass, we wanted to provide additional feedback on the proposed pricing:

- 1) We are glad to see the price point start around the \$30 mark and include the \$1.50 surcharge for the wildlife management public education fund.
- 2) **We would like to get some clarification on the requirement to purchase a COSAR card** instead of incorporating the \$0.25 surcharge for the Search & Rescue Fund as is typical for hunting and fishing licenses. We are not opposed to the COSAR requirement but wonder if it isn't easier to wrap that into the cost of the pass? At the very least we hope that requirement is very clear and that the public will be able to easily purchase a COSAR card with the SWA Pass if needed.
- 3) Some concerns were raised during the discussion of the habitat stamp addition regarding the use of those funds related to restricted use on future property/easement acquisitions. **We would like to see the addition of the habitat stamp purchase as optional**, perhaps

as an opt-out. This would also help keep the total cost of the pass under \$35 and perhaps improve participation and compliance.

- 4) We are very supportive of the low pass prices for day use, youth, seniors and low-income visitors.

Additionally, if the Commission does decide to move forward with the pass, **we propose a temporary exemption for the following properties from the new pass requirement** because of the current recreation use and need to more thoroughly review and adjust the management of these properties. These properties not only provide important recreation opportunities but access to adjacent public lands and the pass created unanticipated consequences for local communities. Additionally, we believe enforcement of the pass requirement at many of these properties will be difficult and therefore inconsistent and confusing for managers and users.

- Beaver Creek SWA (hiking)
- Bergen Peak SWA (hiking)
- Billy Creek SWA (boating)
- Bob Terrell SWA (boating)
- Buena Vista SWA (boating)
- Cherokee SWA (boating)
- Coller SWA (boating)
- Creed SWA (boating)
- Dome Rock SWA (hiking, rock climbing)
- Four Miles SWA (rock climbing)
- Franz Lake SWA (community access/hiking)
- Granite SWA (boating)
- Haviland Lake (snowshoeing)
- Hot Sulphur Springs SWA (boating)
- Loma Boat Launch SWA (boating)
- Mt. Evans SWA (hiking)
- Mt. Shavano SWA (community access, hiking)
- Oak Ridge SWA (hiking/boating)
- Perins Peak (rock climbing)
- Poudre River STL (boating)
- Runyon-Fountain Lakes SWA (community access, hiking, biking)
- Sands Lake SWA (community access/hiking)
- Sarvis Creek SWA (hiking)
- Sharptail Ridge SWA (hiking)
- West Lake SWA (community access)
- Whiskey Creek STL (boating)

Finally, we hope you will continue to take public comments on the pass structure, pricing and implementation before making your final decision. It was difficult to provide information to our members and partners over the holiday in time for them to process the new pass proposal and submit comments prior to the January Commission meeting. We expect many folks will do so in the coming weeks.

Many thanks for your consideration and continued dialogue on this topic. Feel free to reach out to me with any questions. Sincerely,



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