



The Conservation Alliance

Outdoor Business Giving Back to the Outdoors

Senator Michael Bennet
261 Russell Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Congressman Joe Neguse
1419 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Bennet and Congressman Neguse,

On behalf of The Conservation Alliance board and membership, we thank you for your work to protect Colorado's iconic public lands and waterways. Please accept our formal endorsement of the Colorado Recreation and Economy Act (S.241 / H.R.823). The Conservation Alliance is the only coalition of businesses that funds and partners with grassroots conservation organizations working to protect North America's wild places for their recreation and habitat values. For years, we have funded and advocated for the protection of components of this legislation. The Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy (CORE) Act is the most significant and broadly supported effort to protect Colorado's wild places in a generation.

Over the last decade, coordination and compromise amongst businesses, recreation groups, sportsmen, and conservationists have positioned the CORE Act to be both politically viable and widely supported. This well-vetted, comprehensive plan to protect Colorado's wild places should serve as a model for other Western states to follow. The CORE Act secures permanent protection for 400,000 acres of public land across the state by combining and improving four previously introduced bills:

- **The Continental Divide Recreation, Wilderness, and Camp Hale Legacy Act:** Protects 100,000 acres of wilderness, recreation, and conservation areas in the White River National Forest along Colorado's Continental Divide and designates the first ever National Historic Landscape around Camp Hale to preserve and promote the 10th Mountain Division's storied legacy.
- **The San Juan Mountains Wilderness Act:** Protects 61,000 acres of public land in Southwest Colorado's San Juan Mountains.
- **Thompson Divide Withdrawal and Protection Act:** Withdraws approximately 200,000 acres of the Thompson Divide from future oil and gas development.
- **Curecanti National Recreation Area Boundary Establishment Act:** Establishes the boundary for the Curecanti National Recreation Area so the National Park Service can effectively manage the area and expand public fishing access.

The CORE Act protects important wildlife habitat and offers recreationists of all kinds an unmatched opportunity for adventure. Skiers, mountaineers, backpackers, anglers, wildlife viewers, climbers and many others from across the country flock to Colorado seeking adventure in the San Juan Mountain backcountry and the White River National Forest. These outdoor adventure seekers—and the outdoor-inspired brands who employ half a million Coloradans—sustain Colorado’s deep outdoor culture, and are the driving force behind the state’s \$62.5 billion outdoor recreation economyⁱ. Protecting places like Camp Hale, Mt. Sneffels, and the Thompson Divide is good for Colorado’s outdoor recreation economy.

The CORE Act demonstrates that protected public lands are our common ground. It strengthens a growing recreation-based economy, and it protects important recreation assets and wildlife habitat for future generations. We look forward to working with you to pass the CORE Act during the 116th Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Sterling", with a stylized, flowing script.

John Sterling
Executive Director, The Conservation Alliance

ⁱ https://cpw.state.co.us/Documents/Trails/SCORP/2017EconomicContributions_SCORP.pdf