



2026 SUMMER NEWSLETTER

Colorado Wild Public Lands

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Hello CWPL Members, Colleagues, and Friends!

Our Spring here at Colorado Wild Public Lands has been filled with challenges, fights for public land, and exciting land exchange updates. We submitted public comments, met with local communities affected by land exchanges, investigated potential land exchange proposals, and argued for public lands in front of the U.S. Court of Appeals. And time and time again, I saw how much of a role public lands play in our everyday lives.

While attending a public meeting hosted by the Forest Service regarding the Locke Park Land Exchange, I met individuals in the Westcliffe community who rely heavily upon public lands and public access. The concerns they expressed during the meeting serve as a reminder of how important the work we do at Colorado Wild Public Lands is, especially in these smaller communities where voices are often ignored or forgotten. Land exchanges like these act as a microcosm for public lands fights throughout our nation, demonstrating that no matter how large or small the fight may be, ensuring public access is vital for the long-term health and viability of our communities.

Unfortunately, the risk of losing that access and the risk public lands face from private interests continue to rise. In April, Congress utilized an often-forgotten law called the Congressional Review Act to rescind a mining ban on lands surrounding the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, a beloved area in Minnesota that hosts some of the most biologically diverse and untouched natural wonders in the country. In May, the Department of the Interior revoked a 2024 rule that designated conservation as an appropriate use of public lands. And recently, the Roadless Rule has faced its biggest threat yet, as the Department of Agriculture is seeking to repeal the 25-year-old rule that has protected 45 million acres of national forest land.

As these threats to our public lands and public access continue, it's important to remember those people who often aren't given a voice. When organizations like ours unite those people and their communities, we can become an unstoppable force for protecting our lands. Your continued support has helped us give that voice to the public, and we feel honored to keep fighting for our public lands.

Nicholas Green, Executive Director



Welcome Our New Intern, Gigi!

We are thrilled to announce the first-ever intern for Colorado Wild Public Lands, Gigi Beardsley! Gigi graduated from Tulane University in 2025 and brings a wide experience of volunteering for vulnerable communities. Gigi is passionate for protecting our public lands and excited to gain a wonderful experience learning about how a non-profit in the public lands world functions. Gigi will be a wonderful asset for CWPL, and we cannot wait to see the impact she makes! Welcome, Gigi!

Greeley Land Exchange Act

Congressman Gabe Evans has drafted a legislative land exchange between the City of Greeley and the US Forest Service, aimed at consolidating US Forest Service land in exchange for the City of Greeley receiving federal land surrounding the Seaman Reservoir in Northern Colorado. We have been communicating with the congressman's office, the Forest Service's regional office in Northern Colorado, and the City of Greeley to ensure that the legislation is effective and representative of the public's best interests.

Volunteer Opportunities and Events

As we move into summer, we highly encourage our members to explore volunteer opportunities and events with our partner organizations in the coming months!

Colorado Fourteeners Initiative Volunteer Opportunities (sign-ups available at <https://14ers.volunteerhub.com/vv2/>)

- San Luis Peak Trail Maintenance: Thu, July 2 at 1 PM - Sun, July 5 at 2 PM
- Mt. Democrat Trail Maintenance: Thu, July 30 at 7 AM - 3:30 PM
- Capitol Peak Trail Maintenance: Thu, August 6 at 10 AM – Sun, August 7 at 1 PM
- Mt Columbia Trail Maintenance: Thu, August 13 at 12 PM - Sun, August 16 at 2 PM
- Quandary Peak Trail Maintenance: Fri, August 28 at 7 AM - 3:30 PM (8.5 hours)

Aspen Institute: Aspen Policy Academy Public Comment Coaching

- Writing a Public Comment instructional webinar: Wed, August 19 at 8 AM

Updates on our Projects

Locke Park Land Exchange near Hillside: CWPL provided public comments in response to the draft Environmental Assessment released by the US Forest Service in March. Although CWPL expressed its general support for the land exchange, we raised concerns about gaps in the environmental assessment that the Forest Service failed to address and urged it to do so prior to the release of the Final Decision Notice. You can read our public comments here:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/19vQ0P9uqdT6iuAiYffQOe6l-OKik_anR?usp=drive_link

Valle Seco Land Exchange near Pagosa Springs: Attorneys representing CWPL presented oral arguments to the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in May, marking a significant and exciting update for the land exchange. We now await the 10th Circuit Court's decision.

Blue Valley Ranch Land Exchange near Silverthorne: Despite public outcry at the possibility of a permitting system along the Lower Blue River, we are still awaiting the Interior Board of Land Appeals' decision on CWPL's appeal of the land exchange. More information regarding our concerns can be found here: <https://www.summitdaily.com/news/colorado-gold-medal-fishing-land-swap-lower-blue-river-concerns/>. Colorado Parks and Wildlife also conducted a study of trout near the Blue Valley Ranch, finding that excess feeding and stocking from the ranch had led to a significant rise in population decreases and fish lice infestation:

<https://www.summitdaily.com/news/colorado-blue-river-fish-survey-health-decline/>

Willow Creek Land Exchange Near Winter Park: Following a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, Colorado Wild Public Lands received a large document release in January 2026 that provided deeper insights into reconfigurations of the federal parcel involved in the land exchange. This FOIA request (along with many others CWPL has filed in the past) increases transparency for the public to gather a better understanding of issues on our public lands. We are still awaiting a decision on our complaint in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia regarding FOIA violations by the United States Forest Service for withholding appraisals and other documents.

Buffalo Horn Land Exchange near Meeker: As of March 2026, CWPL is still awaiting a ruling on our appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) submitted in November 2023.

Rapid Creek Land Exchange in Pitkin County: After receiving an overview of the land exchange from Pitkin County Open Space in April 2025, we are awaiting the beginning of a NEPA scoping and comment period.

JOIN OUR BOARD MEETING!

Colorado Wild Public Lands will be hosting our quarterly board meeting on July 1, 2026 at 5:30 P.M. at our office at 23272 Two Rivers Road, Basalt, CO 81621.

All are welcome to join!

THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS!

We at Colorado Wild Public Lands sincerely thank each and every one of our members and supporters who have helped our organization impact and protect public lands in Colorado in 2025.

PARTNERS

Southwest Property Law - Maya Kane
Parsons Law Office - Jeff Parsons
Energy and Conservation Law - Travis Stills
JVAM Law - Benjamin Monarch and Ryan Jarvis
Hogan Lovells: Michael Theis and Liz Och
Denver Law - Neil Levine
40BWorks - Suzanne Jackson
Max Ink - Reina Katzenberger
High Country Conservation Advocates
San Juan Citizens Alliance
Wild Earth Guardians
Independence Pass Foundation
Crystal Valley Environmental Protection Association
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Rocky Smith Consulting

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Thank you for supporting CWPL's work!

There is another way to help if you have a digital shopping card at Kroger Food Stores, which includes City Market, King Soopers, Smiths, and Ralphs.

It won't cost you a thing. Just log in to your account and hit the Community Rewards tab. Select Colorado Wild Public Lands or the code WH042, and Kroger will make donations to CWPL based on the amount you spend in the store.