

## ***Mount Blue Sky Wilderness Act***

*Senator John Hickenlooper*

The *Mount Blue Sky Wilderness Act* (S.3044) would redesignate the Mount Evans Wilderness as the “Mount Blue Sky Wilderness”. While the peak itself was renamed, the name of the surrounding wilderness area must be changed through congressional action.

### **Mount Blue Sky Wilderness Act Overview**

- The bill aligns the name of this U.S. Forest Service wilderness area with that of the recently renamed Mount Blue Sky, which the U.S. Board of Geographic Names redesignated from its prior name, Mount Evans, on September 15, 2023.
- Previously, the peak was named for the second territorial Governor of Colorado, John Evans, who promoted policies that led to the murder of more than 200 Cheyenne and Arapaho people in the Sand Creek Massacre – most of them children, elderly, and noncombatant women.
- The name “Mount Blue Sky” recognizes the Cheyenne people, whose annual ceremony of renewal of life is called Blue Sky, and the Arapaho people, who are known as the Blue Sky People.
- The proposal to rename the mountain was initiated by the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes and The Wilderness Society, and has continued to gain support from Tribes, local governments, community groups, and non-profit organizations.
- The *Mount Blue Sky Wilderness Act* changes the name of the surrounding wilderness area to the Mount Blue Sky Wilderness, helping to directly face a dark chapter of Colorado’s history and recognize the traditional homeland of the Arapaho and Cheyenne Tribes.

**Supporters Include:** The Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, Southern Ute Indian Tribe, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, The Wilderness Society, Clear Creek County, Eagle County, Pitkin County, Denver American Indian Commission, American Whitewater, Audubon Rockies, Colorado Sierra Club, National Parks Conservation Association, Rocky Mountain Wild, Dolores River Boating Advocates, Great Old Broads for Wilderness, San Juan Citizens Alliance, Trust for Public Lands, Western Colorado Alliance, High Country Conservation Advocates, The Continental Divide Trail Coalition, Wilderness Workshop, Colorado Mountain Club, Next 100 Colorado, Ernest House Jr.