



Gunnison Outdoor Resources Protection (GORP) Act

U.S. Senator Michael Bennet

With rolling fields of sage, spectacular alpine wildflowers, and subalpine forests, Gunnison County is quintessential Colorado. The Gunnison Basin boasts some of the state's most productive big game units, a long heritage of family ranching operations, and world-class outdoor recreation opportunities. Senator Michael Bennet's Gunnison Outdoor Resources Protection (GORP) Act will protect key portions of this incredible landscape for generations of future Coloradans through a variety of public land management tools, including special designations focused on recreation, wildlife, scientific research, and conservation.

The GORP Act was developed through a decade of collaboration with local governments and public land users. It has bipartisan support from six counties, several local municipalities, the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, a broad array of public land users, and local businesses. The bill is based on a consensus 2019 proposal developed by the Gunnison Public Lands Initiative, a working group formed by Gunnison County that includes summer and winter motorized use, mountain bikers, conservation groups, water users, ranchers, hunters and anglers.

The GORP Act establishes six different types of public land designations, each designed to carefully fit the important values of the lands and community, align with existing uses, and conserve important natural values. The types of designations and their primary purposes are:

- Protection Areas: protect natural and undeveloped character (20,542 acres).
- Recreation Management Areas: provide for and improve the management of recreation resources for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations (18,247 acres).
- Rocky Mountain Scientific Research and Education Areas: encourage and preserve the conditions necessary for natural science research and education, and provide opportunities for the use of continually emerging techniques and methodologies for scientific research (12,250 acres).
- Special Management Areas: conserve, protect, and enhance the natural, scenic, scientific, cultural, watershed, recreation, and wildlife resources of the areas

(214,650 acres).

- Wilderness: preserves and protects the natural ecosystems and wild areas, and provides opportunities for solitude and unconfined or primitive recreation (122,902 acres).
- Wildlife Conservation Areas: conserve and restore wildlife and wildlife habitat (223,865 acres).

The bill also:

- Withdraws key lands in Delta County's North Fork Valley from oil and gas development (74,271 acres);
- Establishes no surface occupancy with respect to oil and gas on some Forest Service lands in Delta County (49,422 acres);
- Provides for the BLM to continue permitting motorized boat use in the Gunnison Gorge and secures public access to a boat ramp at the Gunnison Forks Day Use Area; and
- Transfers the Pinecrest Ranch, owned by the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, from fee ownership to trust ownership (18,529 acres).

Supporters of the GORP Act include: Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Gunnison County, Delta County, Hinsdale County, Saguache County*, Pitkin County, Ouray County, Town of Crested Butte, City of Gunnison, Town of Mt. Crested Butte, Town of Paonia, Town of Ridgway, Gunnison County Stockgrowers Association, Crested Butte Mountain Bike Association, Gunnison Trails, High Country Conservation Advocates, Gunnison Valley OHV Alliance of Trail Riders (GOATs), The Wilderness Society, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District, Trout Unlimited, Gunnison Sno-Trackers, Gunnison Sustainable Tourism Outdoor Recreation Committee, American Whitewater, Wilderness Workshop, Western Slope Conservation Center, Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory, The Conservation Alliance, The Access Fund, Colorado Wildlands Project, Western State Ranches, Conservation Lands Foundation, and others.

** Supports applies only to the portion of the bill in their county*