



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Glenwood Springs Service Center
0088 Wildlife Way
Glenwood Springs, CO 81601
P (970)947-2920

August 25, 2021

TO: Jacob Brey

Deputy Regional Manager – Northwest Region

RE: Sweetwater State Park Draft Plans – Area 8 Comments

Deputy Brey,

Here is a list of comments compiled by Area 8 staff regarding the draft plans provided for Sweetwater Lake State Park:

- Limit motors on watercraft to trolling motors only.
- Post educational signage about the fishery that is in place and illegal fish stocking.
- Monitor increased pressure on fishery - may need to consider increased stocking or more restrictive harvest limits.
- Incorporate an effective ANS monitoring station.
- Maintain riparian vegetation along the lake shore to buffer shoreline development, retain macroinvertebrate and wildlife habitat, and limit trail routing immediately next to shore.
- Consider bald eagle, osprey and peregrine falcon habitat in and around the park – raptor hunting and nesting areas have been identified in the area. Minimize development near these areas, including trail development, and maintain buffer zones during nesting periods.
- Identify “no landing zones” for watercraft on the far west end of the lake to protect existing wetlands and moose habitat.
- Consider reducing the proposed number of campsites and increased facilities for overnight and day-use guests - can a lake that size with limited shoreline accommodate that many people? Other non-wildlife concerns include impacts of traffic to the neighboring community and feasibility of heavier traffic potentially with trailers or large RVs on a small, narrow road.



- Focus development on already existing developed areas south of the county road and minimize or mitigate expansion into current wildlife habitat - e.g., move Admin/Employee Area off of the upper bench (currently irrigated meadow) and put it adjacent to where the old barn is or within the area already impacted near the lake. If possible find another location for the family campground. The upper bench is mapped as a mix of elk winter, severe winter, and winter concentration area. Year-round disturbance in this area in the form of an admin/employee site would discourage use by elk, further reducing continually shrinking elk winter habitat. If horse camping/parking area is to remain where it is proposed on the map, institute a seasonal closure from December 1 to June 15. Eliminate any trail segments that lie on the north side of the county road. Not only is that area winter ground but it also serves as elk calving and deer fawning ground. CPW is attempting to bring deer and elk numbers back up in this DAU and as an agency we should set the example when it comes to development in sensitive habitat.
- Repurpose the Forest Service Guard Station as a remote worksite for Area 8 staff, or provide a small cabin on the premises for this purpose. (Having overnight accommodations would greatly increase Area 8 productivity and visibility in the surrounding area, as Sweetwater is generally harder to access from more major municipalities).

Area 8 appreciates the opportunity to comment on this project, and any questions or comments can be forwarded to Dan Cacho – dan.cacho@state.co.us, (970)456-7003.