



City Opposes Proposed Sale of Public Lands

Letter Shared With Senate Energy and National Resources Committee

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO-June 24, 2025-The City of Steamboat Springs today voiced opposition to a proposal currently under consideration in the U.S. Senate’s budget reconciliation bill that would allow for the sale of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) public lands.

“Public lands drive local economies and sustain western culture — and this proposal threatens to undermine that foundation,” said Steamboat Springs City Council President Gail Garey ““Public lands are not only part of our western heritage — they are the backbone of our tourism economy and local quality of life. We urge Congress to reject this proposal.”

The Steamboat Springs City Council sent a [letter to members of the Senate Energy and National Resources Committee](#) as well as to Colorado’s legislative representatives opposing the sale of public lands in the bill.

It is often said that public lands drive local economies and sustain western culture—and the city offered an example that hits close to home. Emerald Mountain, located west of the Yampa River, and home to hundreds of acres preserved by the city and a network of trails for horseback riding, hiking, and biking. The city also operates the nation’s oldest ski area at the base of the mountain and helps host summer pro rodeo events.



The backside of Emerald Mountain is BLM land, designated as a Special Recreation Management Area, providing critical elk calving habitat and highly valued recreation access for residents and visitors. Steamboat Springs has invested significant time and resources in partnership with the federal government to enhance and protect this public treasure.

The city is also concerned that the Senate proposal prioritizes development without ensuring affordability: while the bill states land sales would support housing development, it does not guarantee those homes would be affordable. In high-demand markets like northwest Colorado, sales to the highest bidder would likely result in high-end housing, further exacerbating affordability challenges.

For more than fifty years, federal policy has emphasized the retention of public lands for multiple uses, balancing conservation, recreation, and economic development. The current proposal would upend this balance and undermine the sustainable economies that communities like Steamboat Springs have worked hard to cultivate.

-WeServeTheCity-

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