§ 539l. Designation of James Peak Protection Area, Colorado

(a) Findings and purpose

(1) Findings

The Congress finds the following:

(A) The lands covered by this section include important resources and values, including wildlife habitat, clean water, open space, and opportunities for solitude.

(B) These lands also include areas that are suitable for recreational uses, including use of snowmobiles in times of adequate snow cover as well as use of other motorized and nonmotorized mechanical devices.

(C) These lands should be managed in a way that affords permanent protection to their resources and values while permitting continued recreational uses in appropriate locales and subject to appropriate regulations.

(2) Purpose

The purpose of this section is to provide for management of certain lands in the Arapaho/Roosevelt National Forest in a manner consistent with the 1997 Revised Land and Resources Management Plan for this forest in order to protect the natural qualities of these areas.

(b) Designation

The approximately 16,000 acres of land in the Arapaho/Roosevelt National Forest generally depicted on the map entitled “Proposed James Peak Protection Area”, dated September 2001, are hereby designated as the James Peak Protection Area (hereafter in this Act referred to as the “Protection Area”).

(c) Map and boundary description

As soon as practicable after August 21, 2002, the Secretary shall file with the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a map and a boundary description of the Protection Area. The map and boundary description shall have the same force and effect as if included in this Act, except that the Secretary may correct clerical and typographical errors in the map and boundary description. The map and boundary description shall be on file and available for public inspection in the office of the Chief of the Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, and in the office of the Forest Supervisor of the Arapaho/Roosevelt National Forest.

(d) Management

(1) In general

Except as otherwise provided in this section, the Protection Area shall be managed and administered by the Secretary in the same manner as the management area prescription designations identified for these lands in the 1997 Revision of the Land and Resource Management Plan for the Arapaho/Roosevelt National Forest and the Pawnee National Grasslands. Such management and administration shall be in accordance with the following:

(A) Grazing

Nothing in this Act, including the establishment of the Protection Area, shall affect grazing on lands within or outside of the Protection Area.

(B) Mining withdrawal

Subject to valid existing rights, all Federal land within the Protection Area and all land and interests in land acquired for the Protection Area by the United States are withdrawn from—

(i) all forms of entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws;
(ii) location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and
(iii) the operation of the mineral leasing, mineral materials, and geothermal leasing laws, and all amendments thereto.

Nothing in this subparagraph shall be construed to affect discretionary authority of the Secretary under other Federal laws to grant, issue, or renew rights-of-way or other land use authorizations consistent with the other provisions of this Act.

(C) Motorized and mechanized travel

(i) Review and inventory

Not later than two years after August 21, 2002, the Secretary, in consultation with interested parties, shall complete a review and inventory of all roads and trails in the Protection Area on which use was allowed on September 10, 2001, except those lands managed under the management prescription referred to in subparagraph (F). During the review and inventory, the Secretary may—

(I) connect existing roads and trails in the inventoried area to other existing roads and trails in the inventoried area for the purpose of mechanized and other nonmotorized use on any lands within the Protection Area as long as there is no net gain in the total mileage of either roads or trails open for public use within the Protection Area; and

(II) close or remove roads or trails within the Protection Area that the Secretary determines to be undesirable, except those roads or trails managed pursuant to paragraph (2) of this subsection or subsection (e)(3) of this section.

(ii) After completion of inventory

After completion of the review and inventory required by clause (i), the Secretary shall ensure that motorized and mechanized travel within the Protection Area shall be permitted only on those roads and trails identified as open to use in the inventory or established pursuant to subparagraph (D).

(D) New roads and trails

No new roads or trails shall be established within the Protection Area except those which the Secretary shall establish as follows:

(i) Roads and trails established to replace roads or trails of the same character and scope which have become nonserviceable through reasons other than neglect.

(ii) Nonpermanent roads as needed for hazardous fuels reduction or other control of fire, insect or disease control projects, or other management purposes.

(iii) Roads determined to be appropriate for reasonable access under section 539l–1 (b)(2) of this title.

(iv) A loop trail established pursuant to section 539l–3 of this title.

(v) Construction of a trail for nonmotorized use following the corridor designated as the Continental Divide Trail.

(E) Timber harvesting

No timber harvesting shall be allowed within the Protection Area except to the extent needed for hazardous fuels reduction or other control of fire, insect or disease control projects, or protection of public health or safety.

(F) Special interest area

The management prescription applicable to the lands described in the 1997 Revision of the Land and Resource Management Plan as the James Peak Special Interest Area shall also be applicable to all the lands in the Protection Area that are bounded on the north by Rollins Pass Road, on the east by the Continental Divide, and on the west by the 11,300 foot elevation
contour as shown on the map referred to in subsection (b) of this section. In addition, motorized vehicle use shall not be permitted on any part of the Rogers Pass trail.

(2) Natural gas pipeline

The Secretary shall allow for maintenance of rights-of-ways and access roads located within the Protection Area to the extent necessary to operate the natural gas pipeline permitted under the Arapaho/Roosevelt National Forest master permit numbered 4138.01 in a manner that avoids negative impacts on public safety and allows for compliance with Federal pipeline safety requirements. Such maintenance may include vegetation management, road maintenance, ground stabilization, and motorized vehicle access.

(3) Permanent Federal ownership

All right, title, and interest of the United States, held on or acquired after August 21, 2002, to lands within the boundaries of the Protection Area shall be retained by the United States.

(e) Issues related to water

(1) Statutory construction

(A) Nothing in this Act shall constitute or be construed to constitute either an express or implied reservation of any water or water rights with respect to the lands within the Protection Area.

(B) Nothing in this Act shall affect any conditional or absolute water rights in the State of Colorado existing on August 21, 2002.

(C) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as establishing a precedent with regard to any future protection area designation.

(D) Nothing in this Act shall be construed as limiting, altering, modifying, or amending any of the interstate compacts or equitable apportionment decrees that apportion water among and between the State of Colorado and other States.

(2) Colorado water law

The Secretary shall follow the procedural and substantive requirements of the law of the State of Colorado in order to obtain and hold any new water rights with respect to the Protection Area.

(3) Water infrastructure

Nothing in this Act (including the provisions related to establishment or management of the Protection Area) shall affect, impede, interfere with, or diminish the operation, existence, access, maintenance, improvement, or construction of water facilities and infrastructure, rights-of-way, or other water-related property, interests, and uses, (including the use of motorized vehicles and equipment existing or located on lands within the Protection Area) on any lands except those lands managed under the management prescription referred to in subsection (d)(1)(F) of this section.


References in Text

This Act, referred to in text, is Pub. L. 107–216, Aug. 21, 2002, 116 Stat. 1055, which is classified principally to sections 539l to 539l–5 of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note below and Tables.

Change of Name

Committee on Resources of House of Representatives changed to Committee on Natural Resources of House of Representatives by House Resolution No. 6, One Hundred Tenth Congress, Jan. 5, 2007.
Short Title
Pub. L. 107–216, § 1, Aug. 21, 2002, 116 Stat. 1055, provided that: “This Act [enacting this section and sections 539l–1 to 539l–5 of this title and enacting and amending provisions listed in a table of Wilderness Areas set out under section 1132 of this title] may be cited as the ‘James Peak Wilderness and Protection Area Act’.”

“Secretary” Defined