

## **RESOLUTION NO. 25-07**

### **A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF RIDGWAY, COLORADO SUPPORTING PUBLIC LANDS**

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Ridgway, Colorado (the “Town”) is a home rule municipality and political subdivision of the State of Colorado organized and existing under a home rule charter pursuant to Article XX of the Constitution of the State; and

**WHEREAS**, Ouray County is home to a significant portion of public lands which are integral to the region's economy, environment, and quality of life; and

**WHEREAS**, these public lands, managed by federal agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, and the Bureau of Land Management, provide essential resources, including grazing lands for agricultural operations, habitats for wildlife, and opportunities for outdoor recreation; and

**WHEREAS**, the citizens of the Town deeply value these public lands for their recreational, economic, cultural, and spiritual significance, recognizing that these lands are accessible to all, regardless of socioeconomic status, race, or gender; and

**WHEREAS**, public lands contribute significantly to the local economy through activities such as mineral extraction, timber sales, ranching, tourism, and outdoor recreation, which contribute substantially to State of Colorado’s economy; and

**WHEREAS**, federal management of these public lands ensures that resources are managed for the benefit of all Americans, addressing complex challenges such as wildfire management, watershed protection, and wildlife conservation; and

**WHEREAS**, the costs associated with managing these lands are a national responsibility, and federal involvement is crucial for the long-term health and sustainability of these resources; and

**WHEREAS**, there are ongoing attempts to transfer or sell off public lands, which are inconsistent with the values and interests of the residents of the Town and the broader State community; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2023 Colorado Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) reveals that outdoor recreation in Colorado generated \$65.8 billion in economic output, contributed \$36.5 billion to the State's GDP, supported 404,000 jobs, and generated \$11.2 billion in tax revenue, demonstrating the profound economic significance of public lands and outdoor recreation to the state and to the Town; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2023 SCORP data indicates that 96% of Coloradans engage in outdoor recreation, with 72% participating at least once a week, and that outdoor recreationists spent over \$52.1 billion on trips and equipment, underscoring the widespread and active use of public lands for recreational purposes; and

**WHEREAS**, the outdoor recreation industry in Colorado contributed over \$17 billion to the State’s economy in 2023, supporting 132,500 jobs, demonstrating the significant economic impact of public lands; and

**WHEREAS**, the [2024 Conservation in the West Poll](#) found that 85 percent of Westerners support creating new national parks, national monuments, national wildlife refuges and Tribal protected areas to protect historic sites or areas for outdoor recreation; and

**WHEREAS**, since the Antiquities Act was passed, 18 presidents - nine Democratic and nine Republican - have designated or expanded over 160 [national monuments across the country](#). And, according to a [2023 Conservation in the West Poll](#), 84% of Westerners - including 71% of Republicans - are more likely to support presidents who use their power to protect existing public lands; and

**WHEREAS**, the Colorado General Assembly has recognized the importance of public lands through initiatives such as Public Lands Day and the memorialization of the Camp Hale-Continental Divide National Monument; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town recognizes the importance of multiple uses of public lands, including but not limited to, grazing, energy development, and recreation.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF RIDGWAY, COLORADO** that the Town of Ridgway hereby:

1. Expresses its strong support for the continued federal management and stewardship of public lands within Ouray County.
2. Opposes any efforts to sell, transfer, or dispose of these public lands.
3. Encourages the Colorado Congressional Delegation to oppose any legislation that would negatively impact public lands and to support policies that ensure their long-term preservation and sustainable use.
4. Opposes any attempts to change the Antiquities Act or reduce the size of our national monuments.
5. Recognizes the multiple uses of public lands and encourages a balanced approach to land management.
6. Urges federal land management agencies to continue their collaborative efforts with local communities, stakeholders, and other governmental entities to ensure effective and responsible management of public lands.

**APPROVED AND ADOPTED** this \_\_\_\_ day of July, 2025.

**TOWN OF RIDGWAY, COLORADO**

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John I. Clark, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

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Pam Kraft, Town Clerk