

PUBLIC LANDS

Federal and state public lands have tremendous impacts on county government, both positive and negative. CCI supports a strong working relationship among state, federal and local governments to coordinate planning functions and implement various policies that minimize burdens on local governments and individual private property rights. CCI supports experimentation initiatives in federal land management that are supported by the affected local governments.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMPENSATION

CCI supports full Congressional appropriation of Payment-In-Lieu-of-Taxes (PILT) to compensate counties for the costs associated with the presence of federal tax-exempt lands. CCI also supports all efforts to compensate counties for lost property tax revenue from tax-exempt lands. Consistent with C.R.S 30-25-301 et seq, compensation must equal the estimated assessment of ad valorem taxes on land withdrawn from county tax rolls for the purposes of wildlife conservation and public recreation. CCI maintains that control of the allocation of U.S. Forest Service moneys pursuant to C.R.S. 30-29-101(3) must remain solely with the boards of county commissioners. CCI supports maximizing and fully appropriating federal payments and taxes due to Colorado counties related to the presence of federal property, including but not limited to federal mineral lease, secure rural schools, and forest service payments and opposes mandatory linkages among federal payment programs that reduce county receipts.

LAND MANAGEMENT

State and federal land management must minimize the negative impacts from wildfire, fuel loads, road maintenance, search and rescue efforts, law enforcement, wildlife, predators, pests, noxious weeds, and undesirable plants. CCI recognizes that wildfires and forest insect infestations may be indications of forest and range health problems. CCI encourages the state and federal governments to provide sufficient funding to alleviate the burden from those negative impacts on local governments. CCI encourages public land managers to develop and implement vegetation management programs that create and maintain healthy, diverse wildland communities attractive for recreation use and scenic quality; provide habitat for a wide variety of wildlife species; reduce fuel loads; and assure a steady supply of water, forage and wood products for the use and benefit of society. All policies and plans for public lands must be consistent with affected counties' policies.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

CCI supports the recovery and preservation of endangered species and also supports efforts to amend the Endangered Species Act in order to improve flexibility under the act. CCI urges consideration of sound-science, cost-benefit and economic impact analyses and recovery plans when proposing species for listing and furthermore encourages balancing the impact of the Endangered Species Act with that of other legislation. CCI supports proactive and creative efforts to restore or reintroduce endangered species considering all potential impacts and subject to local government involvement and approval.

SPECIAL LAND DESIGNATIONS

CCI supports multiple uses on all federal and state public lands. The efficient administration, conservation and development of Colorado's natural resources must be balanced with protection of the environment and consideration of local needs. CCI supports special land designations (including Wilderness) that are consistent with land use policies within the counties and are supported by the county within which the designation is proposed. CCI strongly encourages the Colorado

congressional delegation to base future wilderness legislation with county input. CCI supports strong local involvement and representation on the Multiple Resource Advisory Councils and CCI will act upon any public land reforms.

STATE LAND BOARD

The implementation of the changes to Article IX, Sections 3, 9 and 10 of the state constitution (1996's Amendment 16) must be equitable to counties, and CCI will ensure the Stewardship Trust process considers local government concerns regarding nominated lands. CCI urges the State Land Board to adopt criteria to ensure consistent treatment of nominated lands. CCI believes the State Land Board must consider county input as to the long-term and short-term uses of their lands.

GREAT OUTDOORS COLORADO

CCI supports the objectives of Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) and county involvement in guiding GOCO towards wise investments in Colorado that fulfill the public's trust. GOCO should provide technical assistance to counties for development of projects eligible for GOCO funds, such as parks and related outdoor facilities, including environmental education facilities and county fairgrounds. CCI supports Section 10 of the GOCO amendment requiring PILT payments to counties. CCI encourages distribution of lottery proceeds to counties consistent with article XXVII of the Colorado Constitution and opposes diversions of lottery funds to other state programs.

RS 2477

CCI urges the Department of Interior agencies to expediently implement secretarial direction on processing RS 2477 claims and further urges USDA agencies to adopt a similar policy. CCI also supports congressional legislation and/or Administration adoption of a new policy regarding RS2477 rights of way that is uniform for all and allows federal land managing agencies the ability to recognize these rights-of-way. CCI also urges Congress and the Administration to consult with local officials in the development of a new policy and/or legislation.

WATER

CCI supports balancing traditional consumptive needs and nonconsumptive beneficial uses for environmental needs and recreational economics. CCI recognizes water is one of Colorado's most precious natural resources, and an adequate, dependable supply of water is crucial to all areas of the state. CCI supports Colorado's doctrine of prior appropriation, necessary water conservation and reuse efforts, efforts to seek and maintain state primacy and county control, the application of 1041 powers to water projects to address local impacts, and protection of Colorado's water resources, while avoiding additional future out of state compact calls. CCI opposes attempts by the federal government to usurp the system of prior appropriation in the issuance of necessary federal permits and opposes federally reserved water rights. CCI opposes any designation of Wild and Scenic Rivers or any designation in Colorado where the impacted counties have not participated in the designation or where the designation would conflict with local land use policies or hinder full utilization of the river system. CCI supports developing and constructing cost-effective, environmentally sound water storage or hydroelectric projects consistent with local land use policies in order to utilize Colorado's full river system entitlement and meet state and national energy and growth needs.

CCI PUBLIC LANDS FUND

CCI encourages Colorado's public lands counties to continue supporting CCI's Public Lands Steering Committee in order to ensure adequate representation on federal and state public land legislation or regulatory efforts.