



**Gilpin County
Colorado**

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December 15, 2017

Monte Williams
Forest Supervisor
Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests
and Pawnee National Grassland
2150 Centre Avenue, Building E
Fort Collins, Colorado 80526

Dear Supervisor Williams:

We are writing to formally voice our support for the closure of all USFS lands in Gilpin County, including the James Peak Wilderness Area, to recreational sport shooting.

The public meeting held in Gilpin County on November 6th was very well attended and we heard concerns from both shooting enthusiasts and those against shooting on USFS land. One commonality was the belief that it is not safe to shoot in the forest. Many shooting enthusiasts expressed a desire for a range as they don't feel safe and currently drive to other ranges rather than shoot in the local forest. Other residents expressed concern about noise and safety issues and feel that shooting is not compatible with other recreational activities on public lands.

With the Front Range population estimated at 4.8 million and growing, rural mountain counties like Gilpin will not be able to accommodate the increasing number of shooting enthusiasts. We will witness more accidental shootings and environmental impacts to the forest.

Gilpin County continues to look for an appropriate range location on public or private land and we currently have three options we are exploring. As the second smallest county in Colorado, we don't have a lot of options but we will continue to search for a suitable site.

We thank you and your staff for the thoughtful and detailed work on this forest plan amendment and applaud your willingness to engage all interested parties and land use agencies.

Sincerely,

Ron Engels
Commissioner, District One

Linda Isenhardt
Commissioner, District Two

Gail Watson, Chair
Commissioner, District Three