

Private
STAFF SUMMARY OF MEETING

OTHER COMMITTEE COMMITTEE ON JOINT INDEPENDENT REDISTRICTING COMMISSIONS

Attendance

Hunter Barnett	X
Heather Barry	X
Jolie Brawner	X
John Buckley	X
Martha Coleman	X
Moussa Diawara	E
Paula Espinoza	X
Kevin Fletcher	X
Samuel Greenidge	X
Constance Hass	X
Gary Horvath	E
Jason Kelly	X
Aislinn Kottwitz	X
William Leone	X
JulieMarie Shepherd	X
Macklin Amber	X
McReynolds	X
Danny Moore	X
Blanca Uzeta	X
O'Leary	X
Lori Schell	X
Robin Schepper	X
Simon Tafoya	X
Elizabeth Wilkes	X
Carlos Perez	X
Carly Hare	X

Date 07/23/2021
 Time 07:08:24 PM to 11:05:41 PM
 Place Steamboat Springs
 This Meeting was called to order by Robin Schepper
 This Report was prepared by Matthu Beck

X = Present, E = Excused, A = Absent, * = Present after roll call

Hearing Items Action Taken

Expand All Items

Collapse All Items

07:09:31 PM

Commissioner Schepper gave opening remarks and introduced the informational redistricting video.

07:24:57 PM

Mrs. Shannon Lukens, representing self, testified. She testified that Routt County needs to be with like minded communities that have tourism bases.

07:36:22 PM

Ms. Linda Delaney, representing self, testified. She stated that Routt and Eagle county share thriving tourism economies and should be grouped together.

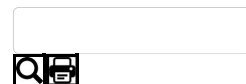
07:43:55 PM

Tim Corrigan, representing self, testified. He shared his views on why Routt and Eagle should be grouped together and not with agricultural communities.

07:47:40 PM

Ms. Robin Crossan, representing self, testified. She repeated previous points on Routt and Eagle county.

07:52:19 PM



Ms. Melissa Hampton, representing self, testified. She testified on how creative districts affect the area and reiterated earlier testimony.

07:55:32 PM

Mr. John Spezia, representing self, testified. He spoke on the history of the community and reiterated previous points to be grouped with Eagle county.

07:59:30 PM

Ms. Beth Melton, County commissioner, representing self, testified. She testified that the current house district will dilute the voice of the community. (Attachment C)

08:03:25 PM

Mr. Cole Hewitt, representing Yampa Valley Housing Authority, testified. He testified that Eagle and Routt county need to be grouped together and share similar housing concerns.

08:06:04 PM

Ms. Catherine Carson, representing self, testified. She testified that Eagle and Routt county are the two most similar counties in the state.

08:20:36 PM

Mr. Richard Buccino, representing self, testified. He testified about the importance of water in the valley.

08:27:14 PM

Ms. Savannah Wolfson, representing self, testified. She testified in favor of the maps and said South Routt should be grouped with other fuels and energy.

08:31:42 PM

Mr. Dave Moloney, representing self, testified. He mentioned the wolf ballot measure as an example of how the eastern slope differs from the western slope.

08:41:43 PM

Ms. Diane Brower, representing self, testified. She reiterated previous testimony on tourism related counties.

08:45:18 PM

Ms. Anne Baroumos, representing self, testified. She reiterated previous testimony about the ski community in the area.

08:52:01 PM

Mr. Lindsay Wert, representing self, testified. He reiterated previous testimony on differences between the west and east range.

08:55:48 PM

Mr. Ken Brenner, representing self, testified. He testified in support of the ski industry and then the education system in the district.

08:59:49 PM

Ms. Linda Miller, representing self, testified. She testified that she works with the master plan for the community.

09:03:49 PM

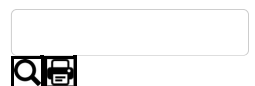
Ms. Sarah Jones, representing Steamboat Ski & Resort Corp, testified. She testified on the preferred district maps for Routt county.

09:09:28 PM

Ms. Eve Partridge, representing self, testified. She testified about concerns with the housing prices.

09:16:30 PM

Mr. Richard McGinnis, representing self, testified. He shared economic facts about the area.



09:17:45 PM

Mr. Rich Lowe, representing himself, testified. He spoke about affordable housing, local government issues, and the rural nature of proposed Congressional District 3. He expressed his opinion that the preliminary maps are good maps.

09:23:06 PM

Ms. Rachael Jacobsen, representing self, testified. She testified on the differences in rural and urban areas within the county.

09:29:20 PM

Ms. Jennifer Filipowski, representing self, testified. She testified that Eagle county is having a community of interest split with the current maps.

09:32:21 PM

Ms. Sonya Macy, city council member, representing self, testified. She reiterated previous testimony that Steamboat Springs should be grouped with other ski towns.

09:41:15 PM

Mr. John Knauf, representing self, testified. He testified regarding CD3 and asked that the western slope be kept together.

09:48:11 PM

Ms. Kaye Ferry, representing Eagle County Republicans, testified. She testified that Eagle County should not be split and should be in CD3.

09:52:33 PM

Ms. Laura Hetrick, representing self, testified. She reiterated testimony to not put Routt County with Boulder County.

09:55:02 PM

Mr. Dave Pabley, representing self, testified. He repeated testimony that Routt county is more than Steamboat Springs.

10:00:08 PM

Ms. Lia Kozatch, representing self, testified. She repeated previous testimony on the price of housing and what districts Routt should be grouped with.

10:03:43 PM

Mr. Carl Wood, representing self, testified. He reiterated previous testimony about the rural areas of Routt county.

10:05:57 PM

Mr. Kelly Colfer, representing self, testified. He stated support for the current map's competitiveness.

10:08:24 PM

Mr. David Wolfson, representing self, testified. He stated that Routt county is a rural county and not just Steamboat Springs.

10:13:53 PM

Ms. Mindy Johnson, representing self, testified. She stated support for the maps.

10:16:28 PM

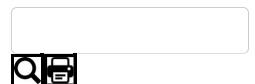
Mr. Gary Burkholder, representing self, testified. He stated support for the current maps.

10:16:49 PM

Ms. Cecilia Escobar-Ceballos, representing self, testified. She testified that the latinx population in the area needs to not have it's voice diluted.

10:20:21 PM

Mr. Max, Schmidt, representing self, testified. Repeated previous testimony on Routt, Eagle, and Boulder county.



10:21:32 PM

Mr. Karl Gills, representing self, testified. He testified on his recommendations for how to change the senate districts in Routt county.

10:26:44 PM

Ms. Susie Cunningham, representing self, testified. She stated that the map is fine except Boulder County shouldn't be grouped with Routt and Eagle county.

10:30:06 PM

Mr. Grant Cunningham, representing self, testified. He repeated the testimony of previous testifier.

10:37:20 PM

Ms. Sarajane Snowden, representing self, testified. She supported previous testimony that Routt county is more than the Steamboat Springs area.

10:37:48 PM

Ms. Mary Leslie, representing self, testified. She testified that communities in the area should be kept together.

10:38:44 PM

Ms. Jalyne Lessig, representing self, testified. She repeated previous testimony that Eagle and Routt county be kept together.

10:40:28 PM

Ms. Michelle Schiau, representing self, testified. She testified in support of the current maps and that Moffett county and Routt county have a symbiotic relationship.

10:43:36 PM

Mr. Greg Bush, representing self, testified. He testified that he would like to see the congressional district split along the continental divide.

10:47:16 PM

Ms. Onika Mayer, representing self, testified. She reiterated previous testimony that Routt county is more than Steamboat Springs.

10:52:32 PM

Ms. Brita Horn, representing self, testified. She reiterated testimony that Boulder County shouldn't be grouped with Routt county.

10:54:07 PM

Ms. Cynthia Schifferer, representing self, testified. She reiterated previous testimony that the community shouldn't be based just on the ski resort.

10:58:27 PM

Mr. Rich Beauregard II, representing self, testified. He repeated testimony to keep Boulder County away from Eagle County.

10:59:18 PM

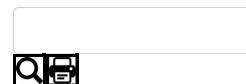
Mr. Mike Laderhouse, representing self, testified. He reiterated testimony to remove Boulder County from the current proposed CD.

11:01:05 PM

Kristy Schainess, representing self, testified. She testified that Routt County being grouped with Eagle county would be a disservice.

11:05:41
PM

The committee adjourned.



A

2021 Congressional Redistricting Comments regarding CD3

by Diane Mitsch Bush

July 23 Hearing of the Colorado Congressional Redistricting Commission in Steamboat Springs

Thank you very much for the opportunity to comment on Congressional redistricting. I am Diane Mitsch Bush. I first moved to Routt County, and thus to CD3, in 1976. From 1983-1993 I commuted weekly during the academic year to Fort Collins to my job as a tenured faculty member at CSU. From 1996-2006, I served on the Routt County Planning Commission. From 2007 through 2012, I served as a Routt County Commissioner and Chaired the CDOT NW Regional Transportation Planning Commission (NWTPR). From 2007-2012, I was a Board member of Club20. I served on the Club20 Executive Committee from 2010-2012. I served as a Colorado State House Representative for HD26 (Eagle and Routt Counties) from 2013-2017, and was Chair of the House Transportation and Energy Committee and Vice-Chair of the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee.

The map now proposed for Congressional Redistricting for CD3 does not comply with the constitutional criteria in sections 44.1 or 44.3 of our revised Colorado Constitution:

In 44.1: Declaration of the People

44.1 (c) The redistricting commission should set district lines by ensuring constitutionally guaranteed voting rights, including the protection of minority group voting, as well as fair and effective representation of constituents using politically neutral criteria

44.1(d) Competitive elections for members of the United States House of Representatives provide voters with a meaningful choice among candidates, promote a healthy democracy, help ensure that constituents receive fair and effective representation, and contribute to the political well-being of key communities of interest and political subdivisions

Communities of Interest defined in the Colorado Constitution

44.3(b) (I) "Community of interest" means any group in Colorado that shares one or more substantial interests that may be the subject of federal legislative action, is composed of a reasonably proximate population, and thus should be considered for inclusion within a single district for purposes of ensuring its fair and effective representation.

Section 44.3 II and III (section elaborates on interests and policy)

Communities of Interest are not preserved in this Preliminary Congressional map for CD3

Contrary to the 1965 Voting Rights Act, as amended and section 44.1(d) of our Colorado Constitution, the map dilutes and divides Hispanic communities of interest in the current CD3. The proposed preliminary map separates San Luis Valley (SLV) and Pueblo from the Hispanic Communities on I-70 corridor and in other mountain communities on the Western Slope. Hispanic communities in the current (old) CD3 have different interests than do those up in Weld county/Greeley. Many families in the San Luis Valley are proud that they are 6th or 7th generation from when this region was part of Mexico and before that the Spanish land grant. This map weakens the ability of Hispanic Communities of Interest to be adequately represented. It may be a violation of the 1965 Voting Rights Act as amended at Section 2(Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act 52 U.S.C. 10301, section (b) at <https://bit.ly/3f52VWm>. Accessed on June 25, 2021)

Instead of retaining the SLV in CD3, the proposed **map adds 3 counties not in current CD3 that share communities of interest with Colorado Springs, Jefferson County, and other areas of the Front Range, not with the Western Slope: Park, Fremont and Teller.** In the proposed map, these 3 counties account for over 13% of the population of the proposed CD3 or 92,072 of the population of 721,713. By adding these 3 counties to CD3, this map fails to reflect our State Constitution at 44.3 (b) (I) "Community of interest" means any group in Colorado that shares one or more substantial interests that may be the subject of federal legislative action, is composed of a reasonably proximate population, and thus should be considered for inclusion within a single district for purposes of ensuring its fair and effective representation. Section 44.3 (b) (I-IV)

The inclusion of these 3 counties is particularly problematic with regard to fair and effective representation of the Western Slope on Federal Public lands policy, Federal Water policy, Federal Housing Policy, and climate policy, as well as economic communities of interest.

See below for more detail on how Fremont, Teller, and Park differ significantly in communities of interest from our Western Slope counties and should not be included in CD3

By adding Park, Fremont, and Teller, the preliminary map would make it very difficult for the interests of many of our Western Slope counties to be represented in the US House.

3. Water- The proposed staff map removes the San Luis Valley (SLV) from CD3 and places the SLV with Weld county and other counties in the South Platte Basin and the Colorado Springs area who are currently destinations for proposed major trans basin diversions from the SLV. Regarding public lands and water, the SLV has much more in common with the mountain counties of the current CD3 than with those CD4 counties in the new map. The Western Slope mountain counties are headwaters for major rivers that are water sources for our whole state and for states to the West and East of us.

The Club20 map previously presented to you keeps the SLV in CD3 for these reasons and because high elevation family agriculture is critical in both the SLV and on the Western Slope. One national park, a wilderness area, and several wildlife refuges along with mountain ranges are major tourist destinations for outdoor recreation in the SLV, just as similar areas are on the Western Slope.

Competitiveness of congressional districts (Section 44.3 (3) (a) through (c))

The map makes CD3 far less competitive compared to the current CD3. Current CD3 has a Republican +6 voter registration. The proposed map is R+11 voter registration. Thus, it does not comply with section 44.3 (3): (3) (a)

“..Thereafter, the commission shall, to the extent possible, maximize the number of politically competitive districts.

(b) In its hearings in various locations in the state, the commission shall solicit evidence relevant to competitiveness of elections in Colorado and shall assess such evidence in evaluating proposed maps.

Having run twice for the current CD3, I know first hand how hard it is to surmount a +6 margin. The +11 margin would make it extremely difficult if not impossible for a challenger to oust the current incumbent.

While not intended, the map is out of compliance with section 44.3 (4)(a): “incumbent protection”

44.3(4) No map may be approved by the commission or given effect by the Supreme Court if:

(a) It has been drawn for the purpose of protecting one or more incumbent members, or one or more declared candidates, of the United States House of Representatives or any political party

Because it changes CD3 from R+6 voter registration advantage

to R+ 11, it will likely protect the current incumbent until 2032.

Solutions for the Commission to consider

To solve these non-compliance issues in the preliminary map for CD3, I propose:

1. Remove Park, Teller and Fremont counties and
2. Add
 - Gilpin
 - Reinstate the 6 SLV counties of Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache

Detailed bases for these solutions

Removal of Park, Teller and Fremont counties

These 3 counties share many interests with Front Range counties of El Paso County, Douglas County and Jefferson County, and they are in the economic and water orbits of the Front Range. They do not share some key Western Slope interests. Indeed, their interests seem to be the opposite from Western Slope interests in many cases.

1. *Public lands and county policies.* Unlike counties in current CD3, these three counties have a smaller proportion of their landmass in Federally managed public lands and, as per their websites, seem to view public lands very differently than do counties and people in current CD3, especially with regard to Federal policy on protection of public lands.
2. Unlike counties on the Western slope, these counties' websites have *no climate plans or Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission reduction plans.* These are major Federal policy issues for Western Slope counties, given the relationship between climate change, drought and wildfires, as well as the impact of climate change on snowpack and the ski industry.
3. *These three counties' water interests are significantly different from the Western slope counties.* All three counties are Eastern Slope routes or destinations for transmountain diversions from the Western Slope. In fact the oldest Trans basin diversion in Colorado comes over Hoosier Pass through Park and into Teller to supply Colorado Springs. Currently there is an additional, new trans basin diversion proposed from the Homestake area (partly in Eagle County,

partly in Lake) over to the Front Range. As mentioned before, several investors are attempting to do major transbasin diversions from the San Luis Valley.

Moreover, *these 3 counties are lower on key drought indices than the state average. All Western Slope Mountain counties score significantly higher than the state average drought index.* All Western Slope Mountain counties are now in either "severe", "extreme" or "exceptional drought". Being at severe, extreme, or exceptional makes family farming and ranching even more difficult and uncertain than agriculture already is. Additionally, ranking at extreme or exceptional means higher likelihood of catastrophic wildfires and greater difficulty and danger in containing them. These 3 counties do not share this community of interest and should not be in CD3.

4. *Contrary to the staff summary of public comments on the website under "Regional Comments- Mountain counties", these 3 are not "mountain counties".*

They contain no ski areas and are not members of the Colorado Association of Ski Towns. Their economies are not primarily outdoor recreation based. Outdoor recreation industries, both retail and manufacturing, are not a significant element in their economies. In contrast, outdoor recreation industries are key elements of the economic base and increasingly important job generators in Western Slope mountain counties and in Mesa County. There is a major synergy in all the Western Slope Mountain counties between public lands, snowpack and water, the outdoor rec industry and the ability to attract new businesses and new skilled employees.

Also, Teller, Park, and Fremont have zero reliance on I-70 and little reliance on the mountain portion of US 50. As noted in points 1-3, above, the communities of interest in these counties are quite different from Western Slope Mountain Resort Counties regarding water interests and their economies. In fact all three are closely associated with Front Range counties, including Jefferson, Douglas, and/or El Paso.

5. In Fremont County, 20% of the population is incarcerated in the 15 prisons in the County. This needs to be considered for reliable and valid determination of eligible voter numbers because these inmates cannot vote, but the Census counts them as residents.

6. **Economy:** key industries and jobs in these 3 counties are significantly different from those in actual Western Slope Mountain counties. Instead they align with larger metro counties on the Front Range and should be grouped with them.

Fremont- The 15 prisons in the county are the major jobs generator. They are by far the largest employer. Another way to look at Fremont County is to examine what industries account for the county's total 15,206 jobs in 2020. Government (which includes prisons and ancillary government services as well as other state and local agencies and land management agencies) accounts for over 5,000 jobs - by far and away the largest employment sector of the county's total of 15,206 jobs in 2020. The sectors usually prominent in mountain resort counties account for far fewer of the jobs in Fremont County (outdoor rec, outdoor retail, accommodation and food, construction).

Economically, Fremont County is very different from Western Slope Counties. It should not be in CD3

Teller – Within Teller County, the top job generators are government, accommodation/food services, retail, and mining. The mining jobs are primarily gold mining in and near Cripple Creek and Victor. There are other smaller mines that extract other minerals. Mining accounts for about 600 jobs, and government jobs account for over 1,400 jobs out of a total of 8,047 jobs in Teller County.

However, *the majority of people in Teller County work in Colorado Springs, and Teller is in the Colorado Springs SMSA.* The 911 emergency services is called "Teller-El Paso". Teller is considered Front Range I-25 corridor, and it is in the Colorado Springs SMSA. Teller County's non-profit coalitions, mental health services, and broadband are all organized with El Paso County.

Teller County is a satellite for El Paso County. It should not be in CD3.

Park - Similar to Teller, a substantial number of Park County residents commute to other counties for jobs, mostly to the Front Range. Some people from both Alma and Fairplay commute to Summit County to work, however the number seems to be small.

Subdivisions around Bailey account for about 65% of Park County's 16,029 residents. The Bailey area is closely connected to Jefferson County, especially with regard to construction. According to the most recent Park County Master Plan, "The rural Bailey area appeals to people who want to work in the Denver Metro Area and live in a more rural and natural environment "... and "When compared to nearby counties, Park County has the highest percentage of residents who work outside of the county with 67% of the population commuting to other counties for employment."

Park County is far more connected by communities of interest to the Front Range than to the Western slope. In fact, it is included in the Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, CO Metropolitan Statistical Area. It should not be in CD3.

Add Gilpin to the proposed CD3

Gilpin shares all the I-70 congestion concerns that plague Western Slope mountain resort counties from Grand to Summit to Routt to Eagle and Pitkin. And it self-identifies as a "rural mountain environment" in its county and chamber planning documents

Put the San Luis Valley back into CD3 where it has been for over 50 years. It has little in common with the counties in proposed CD4, and it shares major communities of interest with the Western Slope Mountain Counties.

1. Compliance with voting rights act: by splitting it off, the Latino culture and voting power is diluted and divided.
2. Like Western Slope Mountain counties, it has a major ski area, Wolf Creek.
3. Water issues: as noted above the threat of new trans basin diversions from the subsurface waters of the SLV (Rio Grande aquifer) to supply Front Range Metro areas is similar to threats of transbasin diversions in several Western Slope Mountain Counties.
4. A national park and national wildlife refuge are key parts of its tourist economy, just as such areas are on the Western Slope
5. In the San Luis Valley, family agriculture is critical to community heritage and to the economy, just as it is on the Western Slope.

The Club20 CD3 map also keeps the San Luis Valley counties in CD3.

B

**Legislative Redistricting- Comments by Diane Mitsch Bush, Routt County for
Preliminary map for Proposed HD57
Hearing July 23, 2021 in Steamboat Springs**

The proposed staff generated map for new State Legislative districts dated June 23 does not comply with the Constitutional criteria set forth at 43.1 (d) and 44.3 (I-III) for proposed HD57.

Communities of Interest are not preserved in this Preliminary map. Instead two very distinct communities of interest are put together as HD 57.

The Commission staff proposed map for Colorado State House Districts puts Routt County with Moffat, Rio Blanco and Garfield as a new HD57. Previously Routt was paired with Eagle County as HD26. That District fit the current constitutional criteria for keeping communities of interest together in regard to many important issues, including similar economies and available jobs, a water quantity and quality crisis, public lands issues, lack of affordable, available workforce housing, worries over high health care premiums, and transportation issues.

As a rural western slope mountain resort county that is a headwaters county, Routt's communities of interest are much more aligned with other rural Western Slope mountain resort headwaters counties like Eagle, Grand, Summit, Pitkin, and others. Communities of interest in these Western Slope mountain resort headwaters counties are quite different from those in rural Western Slope extraction based counties like Moffat, Rio Blanco, and West Garfield. In fact for many key state and Federal policies, they are opposed.

Description of and evidence for Similarity of Routt's Communities of Interest with those in Eagle and other rural Western Slope Mountain Resort headwaters counties.

Economic drivers and top job sectors are very similar in all the rural Western slope mountain resort headwaters counties and very different from economic drivers and job sectors in extraction-based economies of Moffat, Rio Blanco, and West Garfield.

In Routt and the other rural Western Slope mountain resort headwaters counties, the outdoor recreation industry has diversified and boomed in the past decade.

Accommodation/food services and retail are in the top 3 industries and job sectors (Emsi, 2021). In these mountain counties, arts/entertainment/recreation, construction, real estate, education, and health services also account for significant jobs and are economic drivers (Emsi, 2021). In Moffat, Rio Blanco, and West Garfield extraction jobs are in the top 3 industries and jobs (Emsi, 2021).

Extraction: Oil and gas production compared in Routt vs. Moffat, Rio Blanco, and Garfield

2020 Natural Gas & Coalbed Gas Produced (in MCF- 1,000 x number cubic feet): <https://cogcc.state.co.us/data.html#/cogis>

Routt: 50,570

Moffat: 8,375,465

Rio Blanco: 108,860,328

Garfield: 463,161,029

2020 Oil Produced (in barrels): <https://cogcc.state.co.us/data.html#/cogis>

Routt: 44,481

Moffat: 231,829

Rio Blanco: 3,393 719

Garfield: 1,281,493

As you see, oil/gas production in the extraction based economies of Moffat, Rio Blanco and Garfield is vastly larger than in Routt. For example in Moffat natural gas production is over 165 times greater than in Routt.

Coal production and jobs in Routt County compared to Moffat, Rio Blanco, and Garfield

Both jobs and production at the only remaining coal mine in Routt County have declined dramatically over the past decade, especially in the past 5 years due to less international and domestic coal demand. One of the major sources of demand for the Twenty Mile Underground Coal Mine (Foidel Creek Mine, owned by Peabody Energy) has been the Hayden Power plant now owned by Xcel Energy. Hayden power plant Unit 1 will close in 2028 and Unit 2 closes in 2027. Coal mining jobs in Routt County declined from 2017 to 2020 from 278 to 114.

<https://drms.colorado.gov/data-search>

Coal production has varied in Moffat and Rio Blanco, but it is higher than in Routt. Both Rio Blanco and Moffat continue to have significantly more coal mine jobs than Routt. <https://drms.colorado.gov/data-search>

EMSI, 2021 lists coal mining as the number 2 job in Rio Blanco County and the number 3 job in Moffat. Coal mining comes in at number 16 in EMSI's 2021 Routt County report.

It is important to note that using the census category for "occupations" conflates construction and extraction- they are placed in one category under "occupations" in the Census data. That masks the difference between ski counties and extraction counties in terms of actual jobs and industries. Construction has long been a key occupation in mountain resort counties. It has grown in the new real estate boom since the pandemic. When I talk of "jobs" in this presentation, I refer to the jobs by industry sector data.

During this same period in which extraction jobs and industries declined in Routt, the outdoor recreation industry has boomed, including during the 2008 Great Recession and especially during the COVID-19 induced recession.

Ancillary to outdoor recreation are: airfare, lodging, fuel, groceries, and tickets. Outdoor recreation and related industries will become even more important to our economy in Routt County through this decade. Moreover this industry fuels real estate, accommodation, restaurants, and retail. https://www.bea.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/orsa1120_1.pdf

Another critical element of the growing outdoor recreation sector not captured in Census or BEA data is outdoor manufacturing. These local small manufacturing businesses provide good paying jobs and are deeply invested in our communities. They have grown during the pandemic.

Outdoor manufacturing is here and booming because of proximity to intact whole public lands, clean air, free flowing rivers, major ski areas, and avid backcountry outdoors enthusiasts. In Routt some examples are: Moots Cycles, Big Agnes/BAP/Honey Stinger (producer of outdoor energy foods, tents, sleeping bags, clothing and gear for backpacking), Harvest Skis, Hala SUP (stand up paddleboards). In Eagle some examples are: Liberty Skis, Bishop ski bindings, Quiet Kat (e-bikes), and several apparel manufacturers, including Ski Town All-Stars and Locale. Many of these are internationally renowned companies, recognized in magazines and outdoors expos. They are one reason that people want to visit here and move here. Not only are these companies growing here but

also they play a major role in Colorado's burgeoning outdoor recreation industry, which also includes retail and guiding/teaching.

I used to advise Moots Cycles and I raced for them. When coal and oil were in the bust cycle of the energy boom/ bust economies, Moots hired highly skilled welders from the coal industry. As our county moves away from coal mining and fossil fueled power generation, outdoor manufacturing and other kinds of manufacturing will play even larger roles in our local economy and we already have a highly skilled manufacturing work force.

Water conservation. People, local businesses, and local governments value keeping our rivers free flowing and pristine and in their basin of origin. There are many community organizations in mountain resort counties dedicated to preserving our watersheds. Conservation has become even more important as the Colorado River and its water users are more and more affected by unpredictability and rising temperatures that have lowered water levels.

<https://www.coloradoriverdistrict.org/about-us/#Protecting-West-Slope-water-supplies-in-times-of-increasing-unpredictability-and-rising-temperatures>

Municipal and county governments have a host of polices to conserve water and protect riparian habitat. Among these are RICD's (Recreational In Channel Diversions). This type of water right is aimed at keeping water in the river for wildlife habitat and for kayaking, stand up paddle boarding, rafting, and fishing. These rights are adjudicated by the State of Colorado and are critical to maintaining quality of life and vibrant outdoor recreation economics in both Routt and Eagle, as well as many rural mountain resort counties. Extractive counties are not as supportive of RICD's. <https://cwcb.colorado.gov/recreation>

Wildfire and Drought

The current drought started for mountain resort counties in 2002. Eagle, Routt and other mountain resort counties are headwaters counties for major tributaries of the Colorado River. With levels in Lakes Powell and Mead at record lows as of July 2021, we have a growing, immediate crisis. Wildfires in the mountain counties have become more frequent, long lasting, and more deadly since 2002 as the drought has worsened. At the same time, we now have many more homes in the Wildland fire Urban Interface- the WUI.

Both Eagle County https://csfs.colostate.edu/media/sites/22/2020/11/Vail_Community_Wildfire_Protection_Plan-Final-Draft.pdf <https://www.resilienteaglecounty.com/infrastructure>

and Routt County have policies and programs to solve the WUI problems.

<https://www.co.routt.co.us/DocumentCenter/View/2242/Routt-County-CWPP---September-2010?bidId=>

These are partnerships with the counties, state and federal agencies, and the private sector, especially real estate and homeowners' associations.

There appears to be a major policy difference between the mountain resort counties and the extraction-based counties on the Western slope on how best to deal with drought and wildfire on both public and private lands. Tackling climate change and targeting interventions for fuel reduction are favored by the mountain counties, while the extraction counties have not seen climate change as a central issue and have favored more clear-cutting and less targeting of the WUI (in part because they have fewer WUI areas).

Both Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) and the Colorado State Forest Service, as well as Federal agencies (BLM and USFS) are important in preventing and managing wildland fires. State policies have recognized and supported these partnerships.

Having Eagle and Routt in a House district with counties that see the drought and wildlife issues through a fundamentally different lens and thus seek state and federal help differently (or not at all) could dilute and perhaps dismantle key policies and partnerships that have begun to solve these problems. This could move Eagle and Routt backwards.

Public Lands

Having whole, intact public lands is critical for outdoor manufacturing, which is a growing, dynamic industry that creates good paying jobs as part of the larger outdoor recreation industry sector, especially in Routt and Eagle counties. Conserving public lands is essential for outdoor retail, guiding and outfitting, restaurants and accommodations, and for tourism in general and ski area tourism in particular. All of these are big economic drivers in the rural mountain resort counties like Eagle and Routt. For Eagle and Routt our ski areas are a major economic driver, with the base areas largely on private land and the ski runs on USFS land. Both Routt and Eagle have Federally designated wilderness areas on public lands that are beloved by residents and tourists alike and are also key economic drivers for our communities.

In contrast, mineral extraction is seen as the key value of public lands in Western slope counties that rely primarily on extraction such as Moffat, Rio Blanco, West Garfield, and Mesa.

Methane and oil/ gas development on public lands

Surveys, public forums, and letters to editors of local newspapers show that the majority of people in rural mountain resort communities oppose more oil and gas development on public lands and want strict methane rules. The opposite policy preferences hold in extraction-based counties.

Climate change action

Overwhelming majorities of people in rural mountain resort counties believe that climate change exists and that we must deal with it now. Towns and counties in rural mountain resort areas have taken bold steps to lower GHG emissions.

[https://www.co.rouff.co.us/396/Climate-Action-](https://www.co.rouff.co.us/396/Climate-Action-Information#:~:text=In%202019%20Colorado%20Governor%20Jared,by%202050%20from%202005%20levels)

[Information#:~:text=In%202019%20Colorado%20Governor%20Jared,by%202050%20from%202005%20levels](https://www.co.rouff.co.us/396/Climate-Action-Information#:~:text=In%202019%20Colorado%20Governor%20Jared,by%202050%20from%202005%20levels)

Ski companies have been particularly active, since their industry is so affected by lack of snow, which leads to drought. <https://www.steamboat.com/community>

Family ranchers in mountain resort counties have worked hard on climate solutions, for agriculture, water and for wildlife habitat preservation. Climate action is not such a key priority in Western Slope, extraction-based counties.

Lack of Workforce Housing

The gap between locally prevailing wages and available, affordable workforce housing has plagued rural mountain resort communities since at least the 1990's. Lack of housing that is affordable at the prevailing wage levels has made it difficult for small businesses to attract and keep employees. Additionally, teachers, nurses, firefighters, and law enforcement officers are hard to recruit and especially difficult to retain due to lack of affordable housing. This has not been a longstanding key policy issue in extraction-based economies in other western slope areas like Moffat, Rio Blanco, and Mesa.

All the mountain rural resort counties face serious problems due more generally to the gap between locally prevailing wages and the cost of living from housing, to childcare, to food, to health insurance/care and more. State and Federal programs are essential.

Health insurance and health care

The mountain resort counties have the dubious distinction of having the highest health insurance premiums in the country. While they also have high quality

clinics and hospitals, many employed people do not have coverage through the workplace, and small businesses struggle with providing health insurance to employees. State policies have helped here because our representatives in the State House and Senate understand these issues and prioritize them

Higher Education: Colorado Mountain College (CMC)

In Eagle and Routt, as well as Garfield, Summit, Lake, and Pitkin, Colorado Mountain College (CMC) is a key employer and provides a host of higher ed opportunities ranging from traditional Liberal Arts and Sciences to resort hospitality and culinary programs/degrees, to outdoor recreation degrees, to nursing degrees, to programs tailored to fit the needs of local employers. Concurrent enrollment is a critical part of CMC's function, providing many opportunities to people in our district. CMC is chartered as a local district junior college, so its funding and governance structure are different from those for state community colleges like CNCC- Colorado Northwest Community College, serving Moffat and Rio Blanco counties. CMC is funded by local property taxes. When I represented HD26, Routt and Eagle, I carried several bills that clarified and strengthened CMC funding.

Transportation needs and funding

Mountain resort counties like Routt and Eagle are extremely reliant on I-70 and on State and Federal grants to help with local transit and trails, in addition to roads and bridges. When I-70 closes, we do. Many mountain resort communities strongly support and need multi-modal transportation funding. There is less support in extraction-based counties for transit and trails and more emphasis on roads and bridges.

Both Routt and Eagle have commercial airports, unlike many other rural Western Slope counties that have only general aviation airports (GA with no commercial flights). For both counties, paying airlines to bring in jet flights from all over the country is a key part of the local economy, not just for tourism, but also for small businesses of all kinds to thrive. Both the Yampa Valley Regional Airport (in Routt County) and the Eagle County Regional Airport are owned and managed by the counties with private and taxpayer help for flight guarantees. With the exception of Mesa County, the extraction-based counties have general aviation (GA) airports, but not commercial airports.

Family Agriculture is a critical part of our heritage in both Routt and Eagle counties. Helping family ranches and farms stay on the land and preserving productive agriculture has been a major policy emphasis in all the mountain

resort counties since the 1990's. Both Routt and Eagle have very active local land trusts that work with ranching families to preserve productive agricultural lands. Such lands also provide critical wildlife habitat.

More recently, farm to table and farm to school programs have grown, helping family farms with new markets and educating young people about nutrition and where their food comes from. Likewise agritourism has emerged as an important element of tourism in the mountain resort counties like Eagle and Routt.

Arts and historical preservation have become an important element in our rural mountain resort tourism economies. These have a synergy with Ag tourism.

Rural mountain resort counties like Eagle and Routt have a unique set of economic drivers, public policy concerns (especially around public land, water, housing and transportation) and values that are significantly different from those of extraction based Western Slope counties. On key State and Federal policy issues like public lands, water conservation, wildlife habitat, and climate change, policy solutions supported by residents of mountain resort counties are diametrically opposed to those in extractive counties. Please draw a Colorado legislative map that pairs Routt and Eagle, along with any other mountain resort counties needed to make the required population number. (Such as Grand, Summit, or Lake) to make a State House district that represents actual shared communities of interest.

I had the honor of representing the two rural mountain resort communities (HD26) of Eagle and Routt in the Colorado House for three terms. Because both counties share so many values and needs as communities of interest, I was able to really represent both of them well in the State House. Adding in extraction-based counties with very different interests would mean that neither type of county would be well represented.

Thank you for all your dedication and hard work.

Comments on Proposed House District 57 from Commissioner Beth Melton, Routt County

Communities of Interest

The Redistricting Commission is tasked with creating a map that preserves whole communities of interest. This is an important concept, because any elected representative will be tasked with making decisions that represent the interests of their district. In a district in which communities of interest are not preserved, the a representative has to choose between representing one or the other, which necessarily results in a lack of representation.

Resort Rural as a Community of Interest

The self-sufficiency standard (see pages 3-4) provides an important example of “resort rural” communities as a community of interest, and demonstrates why it is so critical for resort rural communities to be in-district with one another. To me, a resort rural community is one in which one of the key economic drivers for the county is a ski resort. A resort rural community is unique in that it is rural, but also possesses many of the economic and social characteristics of an urban area. Our interests are often “part-rural, part-urban.”

Colorado Self-Sufficiency Standard

“This measure describes how much income families of various sizes and compositions need to make ends meet without public or private assistance in each county in Colorado. The Self-Sufficiency Standard is a measure of income adequacy that is based on the costs of basic needs for working families: housing, child care, food, health care, transportation, and miscellaneous items, as well as the cost of taxes and the impact of tax credits. In addition, this report provides for each family type, in each county, the amount of emergency savings required to meet needs during a period of unemployment or other emergency.”

http://www.selfsufficiencystandard.org/sites/default/files/selfsuff/docs/CO18_SSS_Web.pdf

House District 57 (as proposed)

When looking at the self-sufficiency standard for families with children, Routt County requires the 3rd highest income in the state to be self-sufficient, following only Pitkin and Summit Counties (both resort rural). The self-sufficiency standard in Garfield, Moffat, and Rio Blanco Counties is significantly lower than Routt. Routt County’s high cost of living is driven by the resort rural economy, which none of the other three counties in the proposed district have.

Fair and Equal Representation

Routt County’s concerns, pain points, and issues are generally related to our status as a resort rural community, and we need our state representatives to be able to truly represent us and our needs, as do the other counties in our district. Forcing a representative to choose between counties in taking votes and putting forth legislation does not serve anyone well.

Currently, Routt County is in HD26 with Eagle County – another resort rural county. This has served us very well, as the issues and concerns of the counties are very aligned. Our Representative has been able to bring forward and vote on issues that reflect the interests and needs of both counties. For example, early childhood education has long been identified as a priority for both Eagle and Routt Counties, both

the county government and the residents at large. Both the cost and availability of care are incredibly challenging to the working families in our resort rural counties, and our Representative has sponsored bills to help address the issue every year that he has been in office. One important example was a bill, SB20-126 that would make it easier for people who live in condos and townhomes managed by an HOA (which dominate much of our housing stock in resort rural areas) to have family childcare homes. This was a priority for our resort rural area and demonstrates the part-urban, part-rural priorities of such an area. A representative of the proposed HD 57 would have been unlikely to be able to make this a priority bill, but in HD 26 (Routt and Eagle) it was.

Being the lone resort rural county in a sea of counties with very different economies and needs will not serve anyone in the district well. Routt County will lose the shared interests we currently have in HD 26, and we will not receive adequate and fair representation in the proposed HD 57. Please consider resort rural a critical community of interest and leave Routt County in a district with other resort rural counties to ensure that the voice of Routt County is represented at the state capitol.

**TABLE 3. The Self-Sufficiency Standard as a Percentage of Other Benchmarks of Income, 2018
Two Family Types, All Colorado Counties**

COUNTY	SELF-SUFFICIENCY STANDARD FOR ONE ADULT + ONE PRESCHOOLER + ONE SCHOOL-AGE				SELF-SUFFICIENCY STANDARD FOR TWO ADULTS + ONE PRESCHOOLER + ONE SCHOOL-AGE			
	Annual Self-Sufficiency Standard	As Percentage of:			Annual Self-Sufficiency Standard	As Percentage of:		
		Federal Poverty Guidelines	Minimum Wage	Median Family Income		Federal Poverty Guidelines	Minimum Wage	Median Family Income
Adams	\$64,416	310%	299%	80%	\$71,856	287%	167%	80%
Alamosa	\$50,230	242%	233%	108%	\$57,702	230%	134%	112%
Arapahoe	\$67,460	325%	313%	83%	\$75,262	300%	175%	84%
Archuleta	\$57,080	275%	265%	101%	\$64,579	257%	150%	102%
Baca	\$37,500	180%	174%	88%	\$44,417	177%	103%	94%
Bent	\$38,313	184%	178%	87%	\$45,777	182%	106%	104%
Boulder	\$78,926	380%	366%	81%	\$85,836	342%	199%	79%
Broomfield	\$69,894	336%	324%	86%	\$78,040	311%	181%	87%
Chaffee	\$54,716	263%	254%	93%	\$62,284	248%	145%	95%
Cheyenne	\$45,816	220%	213%	77%	\$52,959	211%	123%	80%
Clear Creek	\$74,446	358%	346%	92%	\$81,578	325%	189%	91%
Conejos	\$44,687	215%	207%	97%	\$52,254	208%	121%	102%
Costilla	\$50,068	241%	232%	130%	\$57,613	230%	134%	134%
Crowley	\$39,935	192%	185%	101%	\$48,105	192%	112%	110%
Custer	\$45,779	220%	213%	105%	\$52,956	211%	123%	110%
Delta	\$51,074	246%	237%	104%	\$58,527	233%	136%	107%
Denver	\$65,727	316%	305%	134%	\$72,223	288%	168%	132%
Dolores	\$47,260	227%	219%	96%	\$55,115	220%	128%	101%
Douglas	\$76,534	368%	355%	155%	\$83,591	333%	194%	153%
Eagle	\$71,674	345%	333%	146%	\$78,362	304%	177%	140%
Elbert	\$62,684	302%	291%	127%	\$70,355	280%	163%	129%
El Paso	\$57,711	278%	268%	117%	\$65,283	260%	152%	119%
Fremont	\$44,752	215%	208%	91%	\$52,125	208%	121%	95%
Garfield	\$69,001	332%	320%	140%	\$76,807	306%	178%	140%
Gitpin	\$63,397	305%	294%	129%	\$71,101	283%	165%	130%
Grand	\$63,210	304%	293%	128%	\$70,961	283%	165%	130%
Gunnison	\$55,335	266%	257%	112%	\$63,001	251%	146%	115%
Hinsdale	\$54,627	263%	254%	111%	\$62,687	250%	145%	115%
Huerfano	\$48,664	234%	226%	99%	\$55,933	223%	130%	102%
Jackson	\$69,911	336%	325%	142%	\$77,963	311%	181%	143%
Jefferson	\$68,123	328%	316%	138%	\$75,953	303%	176%	139%
Kiowa	\$42,193	203%	196%	86%	\$50,568	201%	117%	92%
Kit Carson	\$42,382	204%	197%	86%	\$50,677	202%	118%	93%
Lake	\$57,998	279%	269%	118%	\$66,070	263%	153%	121%

Definitions: The federal poverty guidelines for family of three = \$20,780 and for a family of four = \$25,100. Annual minimum wage is the gross amount of full-time, year-round work at an hourly wage of \$10.29 per hour, the 2018 Colorado minimum wage. Median family income varies by MSA and calculated from HUD's FY2018 Income Limits.

TABLE 3. The Self-Sufficiency Standard as a Percentage of Other Benchmarks of Income, 2018
Two Family Types, All Colorado Counties

COUNTY	SELF-SUFFICIENCY STANDARD FOR ONE ADULT + ONE PRESCHOOLER + ONE SCHOOL-AGE				SELF-SUFFICIENCY STANDARD FOR TWO ADULTS + ONE PRESCHOOLER + ONE SCHOOL-AGE			
	Annual Self-Sufficiency Standard	As Percentage of:			Annual Self-Sufficiency Standard	As Percentage of:		
		Federal Poverty Guidelines	Minimum Wage	Median Family Income		Federal Poverty Guidelines	Minimum Wage	Median Family Income
La Plata	\$60,165	290%	279%	122%	\$68,438	273%	159%	125%
Larimer	\$59,694	287%	277%	121%	\$67,350	268%	156%	123%
Las Animas	\$48,641	234%	226%	99%	\$55,978	223%	130%	102%
Lincoln	\$47,582	229%	221%	97%	\$55,389	221%	129%	101%
Logan	\$44,316	213%	206%	90%	\$51,626	206%	120%	94%
Mesa	\$49,211	237%	238%	100%	\$56,536	225%	131%	103%
Mineral	\$47,464	228%	220%	96%	\$55,409	221%	129%	101%
Moffat	\$62,671	302%	291%	127%	\$70,387	280%	163%	129%
Montezuma	\$49,426	238%	229%	100%	\$56,856	227%	132%	104%
Montrose	\$54,078	260%	251%	110%	\$61,794	246%	143%	113%
Morgan	\$45,275	218%	210%	92%	\$52,483	209%	122%	96%
Otero	\$40,374	194%	187%	82%	\$48,171	192%	112%	88%
Ouray	\$54,313	261%	252%	110%	\$62,086	247%	144%	114%
Park	\$67,896	328%	314%	138%	\$75,309	300%	175%	138%
Phillips	\$50,282	242%	233%	102%	\$57,620	230%	134%	105%
Pitkin	\$90,931	438%	422%	185%	\$94,674	377%	220%	173%
Prowers	\$44,149	212%	205%	90%	\$51,281	204%	119%	91%
Pueblo	\$46,187	222%	214%	94%	\$53,571	213%	124%	98%
Rio Blanco	\$55,896	269%	259%	114%	\$63,556	255%	148%	116%
Rio Grande	\$44,254	213%	205%	90%	\$51,867	207%	120%	95%
Routt	\$79,084	381%	367%	161%	\$86,403	344%	201%	158%
Saguache	\$44,292	213%	208%	90%	\$51,894	207%	120%	95%
San Juan	\$59,934	288%	278%	122%	\$67,937	271%	158%	124%
San Miguel	\$65,108	313%	302%	132%	\$70,340	280%	163%	129%
Sedgwick	\$44,758	215%	208%	91%	\$52,062	207%	121%	95%
Summit	\$79,657	383%	370%	162%	\$87,121	347%	202%	159%
Teller	\$54,303	261%	252%	110%	\$62,030	247%	144%	113%
Washington	\$40,401	194%	188%	82%	\$49,624	195%	115%	91%
Weid	\$55,086	265%	256%	112%	\$62,769	250%	148%	115%
Yuma	\$41,632	200%	193%	85%	\$50,213	200%	117%	92%
Minimum (Baca County)	\$37,500	180%	174%	88%	\$44,417	177%	103%	94%
Maximum (Pitkin County)	\$90,931	438%	422%	185%	\$94,674	377%	220%	173%

Definitions: The federal poverty guidelines for family of three = \$20,780 and for a family of four = \$25,200. Annual minimum wage is the gross amount of "full time, year-round" work at an hourly wage of \$10.20 per hour, the 2018 Colorado minimum wage. Median family income varies by and calculated from HUD's FY2018 Income Lines.