

Grand Junction Sentinel - Editorial



https://www.gjsentinel.com/opinion/editorials/make-camp-hale-a-monument/article_26fdf47a-27e2-11ed-8c96-e36046817bbe.html

Make Camp Hale a monument

Aug 30, 2022

Camp Hale outside Leadville was used during World War II as a training area for the 10th Mountain Division, with members of that division fighting in key battles in the war and afterwards helping establish the ski industry in the state. It is past time to protect Camp Hale by designating it a National Monument.

Most of the men who were training at Camp Hale and fought bravely to defend the U.S. and Europe in World War II have passed away. If this historic place isn't made a National Monument soon there won't be any left to see it protected.

Last week, U.S. Sens. Michael Bennet and John Hickenlooper and U.S. Rep. Joe Neguse were joined by Gov. Jared Polis in writing to President Joe Biden to ask him in part to use his authority under the Antiquities Act to designate the Camp Hale area and acreage on the Tenmile Range as the Camp Hale — Continental Divide National Monument, according to reporting by The Daily Sentinel's Dennis Webb.

Outside the valley floor where the soldiers were housed, the Army used the mountainous terrain to train soldiers for winter warfare, and generations since have recreated in the same landscape. Protecting this area has been something in the works

through the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act, which has passed in the House of Representatives multiple times but has yet to clear the Senate.

The bill would withdraw about 200,000 acres in the Thompson Divide area from future oil and gas leasing, provide wilderness or other conservation designations for other lands from Colorado's central mountains to southwest Colorado, formally designate the boundaries of the long-existing Curecanti National Recreation Area west of Gunnison, and establish Camp Hale outside Leadville as the nation's first National Historic Landscape.

"This legislation has been built from the ground up with years of dedicated stakeholder engagement and enjoys bipartisan support," the letter to Biden says. "Regrettably, progress in Congress has stalled despite strong support in Colorado. The time has come to take the next step in protecting the key landscapes within the CORE Act and we need your help."

We have written in support of the CORE Act before and we still think it should be passed. That said, the Senate has not been able to come together to get this legislation onto the president's desk. Since Biden can protect this historic area without the need of new legislation, we believe the time has come to do so.

Notwithstanding, there are other aspects of the CORE Act that should continue to be pursued. It may take passing the various aspects of this legislation in a more piecemeal fashion, but it should not be abandoned.

While that hard work continues, we can show the men who trained at Camp Hale our thanks and respect by protecting this place that is so important to Colorado's history and the history of our armed services.

Make Camp Hale and the surrounding landscape a National Monument this year.

Letter: Let's preserve the legacy of Camp Hale for future generations

Opinion **OPINION** | 4h ago

The 10th Mountain Chapter of Daughters of American Revolution is thrilled to support a presidential designation of the Camp Hale-Continental Divide National Monument. We have long supported the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act and the inclusion of the Camp Hale area in it.

Moving forward to make Camp Hale and the surrounding lands where the 10th Mountain Division trained, including the Tenmile Range, a National Monument pays appropriate honor to the sacrifices made by the unique and courageous ski troopers of World War II. Their achievements in building today's thriving outdoor recreation industry after the war is further inspiration to our work supporting troops at home and abroad.

DAR is a nonprofit, non-political volunteer service organization dedicated to promoting patriotism, preserving American history, and securing America's future through better education for children. The organization was founded with the mission of promoting historic preservation, education, and patriotism. This is why the protection of Camp Hale and the legacy of the 10th is so important to us.

Equally important is preserving the integrity and wildness of all the lands included in the CORE Act. Our precious and beautiful landscapes are what inspire our troops to fight when deployed far from home. Our wildlands contribute to everyone's health and sense of security. They are the foundation for biodiversity, and provide us with clean air and water, which is a human right.

A healthy, balanced environment is one of our most powerful tools for keeping our democracy safe and secure. We at 10th Mountain NSDAR strongly support the CORE Act for protecting these values. Please join us in encouraging President Biden to designate the Camp Hale-Continental Divide National Monument.

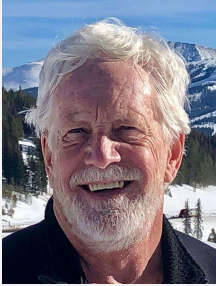
Ricki Shaw Sherlin

Regent, 10th Mountain Chapter NSDAR

Vail

Browning: A last best place worth preserving

Michael Browning
Valley Voices



Mike Browning

I am writing on behalf of the Eagle Summit Wilderness Alliance, an all-volunteer nonprofit that works in coordination with the U.S. Forest Service to protect, preserve, and maintain the four federally designated Wilderness Areas in Eagle and Summit counties. In 2021, our members contributed over 7,000 volunteer hours to our local Wilderness areas.

The Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act would protect 400,000 acres of Colorado public lands from development, much of it through Wilderness designation. The CORE Act is the result of more than a decade of collaborative efforts by Colorado's environmental, recreation, hunting, business, and local governmental entities to craft a bill that is acceptable to that wide spectrum of interest holders. It represents compromises by all concerned to obtain a hard-fought and rarely obtained consensus on the management of public lands across Colorado.

We greatly appreciate the long efforts of Sens. Michael Bennet and John Hickenlooper, Rep. Joe Neguse, and Gov. Jared Polis, to obtain passage of the CORE Act. Despite these best efforts, unfortunately, the CORE Act has been stymied by a Senate filibuster, even though it was passed five times by the House.

Consequently, ESWA strongly urges President Biden to achieve some of the goals of the CORE Act by using his administrative powers and the Antiquities Act to designate the Camp Hale-Continental Divide National Monument.

We trust that Biden and CORE Act champions in Congress will continue to push for the highest level of protection for all the remaining portions of the CORE Act, especially permanent protection for the lands that would receive congressional designation as Wilderness under the 1964 Wilderness Act.

While we support the creation of the new National Monument as a first step, we urge the president to vigorously:

- Continue to support the passage of the full CORE Act.
- Press to include in the national monument boundaries all areas used by 10th Mountain troops for training that would become Wilderness under CORE, and protect them for future Wilderness designation, including the Megan Dickie addition to the Holy Cross Wilderness, Hoosier Ridge, and the Straight Creek addition to the Ptarmigan Peak Wilderness. Although the Straight Creek addition is only 500 acres, it is critical to completing the essential wildlife land bridge over I-70 atop the Continental Divide.
- Encourage the Forest Service to give maximum protection in the pending Gunnison Uncompahgre Forest Management Plan and in the future White River National Forest plan to those areas that would become formal Wilderness Areas under the CORE Act, such as Spraddle Creek, and Ptarmigan additions.
- Make permanent the mineral withdrawal in the Thompson Divide.

These steps would strongly support the Biden Administration's dedication to the goal under the America the Beautiful Act to safeguard 30% of our nation's land and waters by 2030. The president needs to include maximum administrative protection to those lands set forth above until the CORE Act passes — especially the incredible and irreplaceable wilderness quality lands. We cannot leave those areas behind as they are “the last best places.”

Michael Browning is a board member and past chair of the Eagle Summit Wilderness Alliance. More information can be found at EagleSummitWilderness.org.

Letter: National monument is an important first step

Opinion **OPINION** | 3h ago

I applaud the recent outpouring of support for creating the Camp Hale–Continental Divide National Monument. The monument is a good start toward protecting some of our most beautiful, but unprotected, public lands in Eagle and Summit counties.

The mere fact of being “public” land does not ensure protection from development. The U.S. Forest Service and BLM are required to manage public lands under their jurisdiction for multiple uses, which include timber harvesting, mineral extraction, and energy development.

The proposed Camp Hale–Continental Divide National Monument also would preserve from development lands well beyond Camp Hale itself, lands that the CORE Act, if passed, would have protected as Wilderness, like the Tenmile Wilderness Area. The call to President Biden is also to use his authority to safeguard the stunningly beautiful Thompson Divide, and move toward greater protection of CORE Act lands in impending Forest Service plans.

Despite passing in the House five times, the Senate has stalled CORE repeatedly. Congress will eventually pass this popular public lands bill. As a first step, the creation of the new monument is a significant way to protect some of the CORE lands, while honoring the legacy of the uniquely trained mountain troops of the 10th Mountain Division, who returned to establish the ski industry that is integral to Vail’s history and culture today.

Go to coreact.org and sign the petition urging President Biden to act.

Frances Hartogh
Vail

Letter: Support for Camp Hale national monument

Opinion **OPINION** | September 17, 2022

We have lived throughout the area from Glenwood to Leadville to Avon for the past 54 years. We spend more time in the Tennessee Pass area enjoying the beauty of nature than we do in our own backyard in Avon. Right now we have an incredible opportunity to protect some of the unique and special wild places that drew us here. We hope President Biden will designate the Camp Hale-Continental Divide a national monument.

What an appropriate way to honor those who heroically fought in the 10th Mountain Division to defend our country and the rise of fascism in the world. These men also had an enormous role in building today's outdoor recreation industry, including most of our Colorado ski areas. The Tenmile Range surrounding Camp Hale is where the real training took place and both areas have been included in the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act for over a decade. They deserve to be made into a national monument. So, we are urging President Biden to take the first step and ensure that Camp Hale and Tenmile Range are protected with national monument status, and we ask for his support for permanent protection of all the lands in the CORE Act.

Please help us protect our amazing lands for future generations to enjoy.

Mary Harrel Lawrence and Jerry McMahan

Avon

Seibert: The spirit of the 10th Mountain Division

Opinion **OPINION** |

Pete Seibert, Valley Voices



Pete Seibert

My dad, Peter, rarely talked about the war. One winter day in 1989, he called me and asked for a ride to Camp Hale. Once there he slung a heavy pack onto his back, strapped on his skis, and set off for the Jackal Hut, all alone. Maybe he was seeking the solace of the mountains; or reliving memories of the place that seeded his destiny. I often wonder what it was like for the other hut guests when Pete Seibert joined them for the night.

In early 1942, the Army built Camp Hale south of Red Cliff to train fighters for mountain warfare. The 10th Mountain was a different bunch: skiers recruited from Ivy League colleges, refugees and skiing greats from northern Europe, boys from Georgia who had never seen snow. Allured by the glamorous idea of being a fighting mountain ski trooper, they came with the spirit of adventure and patriotism.

Their heroism, victories, and sacrifices during the three-month assault that broke the enemy lines in northern Italy are infamous. They silently scaled a 2,000-foot sheer rock cliff in the middle of the night to surprise and defeat enemy troops atop a mountain called Riva Ridge. They defeated road-tethered enemy units by traveling cross-country to cut off the foe. They built miniature ski trams to evacuate their wounded from mountaintops. For 10th Mountain troops, then and today, the impossible doesn't exist.

Though Pete wore his battle scars all his life, what he really brought back from the war was a different kind of spirit — one that knew no limits. That attitude, along with a love of the outdoors grown from years of mountain training at Camp Hale, helped make snowsports and outdoor recreation what it is today.

Earl Eaton, who had helped build Camp Hale, showed Pete the mountain that would become Vail. Pete, Earl and other 10th Mountain veterans like Jack Tweedy, Ben Duke, and later Sarge Brown and Bob Parker, brought their pioneering attitude to Vail. They carved the resort out of a quiet sheep pasture in six months.

It had taken just seven months to build the entire Camp Hale, so building The Lodge at Vail, MidVail, three ski lifts; opening the expansive bowls and cutting runs — one they named Riva Ridge — in six months? No problem.

No snow the first year? No problem. They brought in native Utes for a snow dance, and it snowed.

No skiers? Bob Parker fixed that. Similar scenarios of ingenious creation were happening throughout the nation as Americans took to the outdoors, led, and inspired by many veterans of the 10th Mountain Division.

This is Vail's heritage, and our legacy for future generations. It is the spirit that helped build our country and community. Today we can support a new national monument that commemorates the legacy of the 10th Mountain Division. I believe Vail's Founders would say, "Yes! We can do this!"

Please join me and support the designation of the Camp Hale-Continental Divide National Monument. Learn more and sign the petition today at [coreact.com](https://www.coreact.com).

Pete Seibert Jr. came to Vail in 1962 as a young boy when his father founded the Vail ski area. He currently serves on the Vail Town Council.

SUMMIT DAILY

<https://www.summitdaily.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor-biden-should-support-the-colorado-outdoor-recreation-and-economy-act/>

Letter to the Editor: We need to protect Camp Hale, the Tenmile Range at the federal level

*Mary Harrel Lawrence and Jerry McMahan
Avon*

We have lived throughout the area — from Glenwood to Leadville to Avon — for the past 54 years. We spend more time in the Tennessee Pass area enjoying the beauty of nature than we do in our own back yard in Avon.

Right now we have an incredible opportunity to protect some of the unique and special wild places that drew us here. We hope President Joe Biden will designate the Camp Hale-Continental Divide a National Monument!

What an appropriate way to honor those who heroically fought in the 10th Mountain Division to defend our country and stifle the rise of fascism in the world! These men also had an enormous role in building today's outdoor recreation industry, including most of our Colorado ski areas.

The Tenmile Range surrounding Camp Hale is where the real training work took place, and both areas have been included in the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy (CORE) Act for over a decade. They deserve to be made into a National Monument.

So, we are urging Biden to take the first step and ensure that Camp Hale and Tenmile Range are protected with National Monument status, and we ask for his support for permanent protection of all the lands in the CORE Act.

Please help us protect our amazing lands for future generations to enjoy.

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Letters to the Editor: Biden should support the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act

<https://www.summitdaily.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor-biden-should-support-the-colorado-outdoor-recreation-and-economy-act/>

*Beth Groundwater
Breckenridge*

Along with Sens. Michael Bennet and John Hickenlooper, Rep. Joe Neguse and Gov. Jared Polis, I urge President Joe Biden to designate Camp Hale and the Continental Divide, including the Tenmile Range, as the Camp Hale – Continental Divide National Monument. As the daughter of a veteran, I appreciate the historical significance of the Camp Hale training ground for the 10th Mountain Division ski troops that should be preserved.

And, as a Summit County resident living in the shadow of the Tenmile Range, I understand the need to protect and sustain this source of water for the western United States; breeding ground

for mountain wildlife and wildflowers; and playground for skiers, snowboarders, hikers, and mountain bikers who need these mountains to refresh and renew their bodies and spirits.

Creating this national monument is part of a plan to enact all the provisions of the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act, which would increase protections for 400,000 acres of some of our state's most treasured public lands, including the Thompson Divide, Camp Hale and the Continental Divide, Curecanti National Recreation Area, and the San Juan Mountains.

Despite strong local support for this legislation, the bill has stalled in Congress. Creating the Camp Hale – Continental Divide National Monument will be the first step to release that deadlock and build momentum to finish the job.

Join me in sending a message to President Biden today by going to [COREAct.org](https://www.coreact.org) and clicking on the red "Take Action" button!

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[Letter to the Editor: This outdoor recreation bill needs to be passed by the US Senate](https://www.summitdaily.com/opinion/letter-to-the-editor-this-outdoor-recreation-bill-needs-to-be-passed-by-the-us-senate/)

<https://www.summitdaily.com/opinion/letter-to-the-editor-this-outdoor-recreation-bill-needs-to-be-passed-by-the-us-senate/>

*Sherie Sobke
Silverthorne*

The White River National Forest, which includes Summit and eight other counties, is the nation's most visited national forest. This forest and many other public lands across our state are under immense pressure from human use.

To help protect these beautiful landscapes, the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act was generated by many local citizens' groups over the past decade. The act would safeguard 400,000 acres of Colorado's public lands, including Summit County's Tenmile Range, with wildlife, wilderness, and recreation protections. Though it has gained the bipartisan support of every county it touches and though it passed the U.S. House of Representatives three times, the act has stalled in the divided Senate.

Recently, Sens. Michael Bennet and John Hickenlooper, Rep. Joe Neguse, and Gov. Jared Polis asked President Joe Biden to use his executive power to create the Camp Hale-Continental Divide National Monument. This would immediately protect about 60,000 very special acres of the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act, including the Tenmile Range from Quandary to Frisco, and the WWII training base for the country's first mountain troopers at Camp Hale.

As a business owner I feel both the positive and negative impacts of increased population on public lands, the wildlife and especially on the flora, as that is my love and specialty. The act would protect that natural beauty for many generations to come. That's why I urge President Biden to designate the Camp Hale-Continental Divide National Monument, an awesome first step to protecting all the lands in the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act.

Please go to [COREAct.com](https://www.coreact.com) to see the huge list of supporters and sign a petition to President Biden to make the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act and the national monument a priority.

This is a big win for Summit County and for you! The wildflowers, and I, thank you!

SUMMIT DAILY

<https://www.summitdaily.com/opinion/letter-to-the-editor-camp-hale-tenmile-range-deserve-national-monument-status/>

Letter to the Editor: Camp Hale, Tenmile Range deserve national monument status

Opinion **OPINION** | September 15, 2022

Nissa Erickson, Dillon

Designating Camp Hale and the majestic Tenmile Range as a national monument honors the 10th Mountain Division veterans' incredible legacy and legendary contributions to the United States and Colorado. Protecting these landscapes is a powerful tribute to those that served our country in World War II and went on to build our ski and outdoor economy. Today, the ski industry generates \$4.8 billion in annual economic output and supports 46,000 jobs. Outdoor recreation contributed \$9.6 billion to Colorado's economy in 2020 alone.

The Tenmile Range forms the backdrop visitors see when exploring Summit County and our mountain towns. Preserving the mountain range protects the ecosystem in perpetuity. The designation would guarantee sustainable recreation opportunities like mountain biking, hiking, backcountry skiing, and climbing for future generations. Our community values the natural environment and the ability to get outside, and our economy relies on it.

Protecting public lands is an American value and part of our heritage. Due to the hard work of countless organizations, towns, counties, veterans, and individuals who crafted the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act, 86% of Coloradans support it. The legislation passed the U.S. House of Representatives an astonishing five times but stalled in the Senate. The ultimate goal is to pass the entire bill, and Gov. Jared Polis, Sens. Michael Bennet, John Hickenlooper, and Rep. Joe Neguse are committed to this goal. They recognize that a national monument designation is an essential first step.

Our local communities and elected officials have worked together for over a decade to protect these places. The contributions of the 10th Mountain Division veterans to

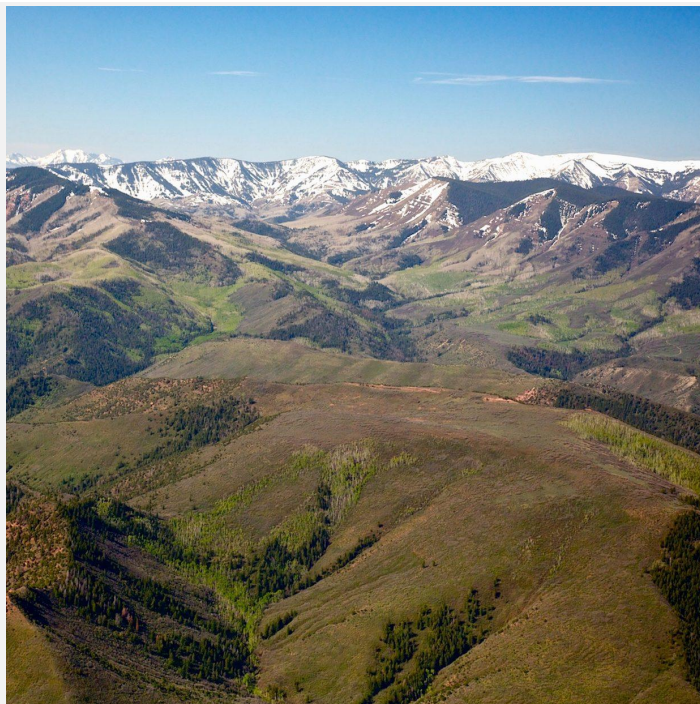
our state and our country transcend time. President Joe Biden has an opportunity to honor Colorado's past, present, and future by designating the Camp Hale-Continental Divide National Monument.

POST INDEPENDENT

<https://www.postindependent.com/opinion/guest-column-president-biden-the-time-is-now-to-protect-the-thompson-divide/#>

Guest column: President Biden, the time is now to protect the Thompson Divide

Opinion **OPINION** | 22h ago



The Thompson Divide is a patchwork of public lands situated west of Carbondale, stretching from the Four Mile Park area on the north and McClure Pass on the south.

TDleases-GPI-040415

For six generations, Sunfire Ranch has been a working ranch — this land has yielded countless traincars of potatoes, more sheep and cattle than we can count and a cornucopia of produce. But, perhaps more importantly, it's also grown stewards of the land. And, specifically, stewards of the Thompson Divide — a 200,000 acre landscape filled with wildlife and wonder that abuts Sunfire Ranch. But, I'm not writing today to describe this incredible place — anyone who lives nearby knows how magnificent these public lands and waters are.

I'm writing to applaud Colorado leaders — Sens. Michael Bennet and John Hickenlooper, Rep. Joe Neguse and Gov. Jared Polis — who are calling on Pres. Biden and his administration to protect the landscapes in the proposed Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy (CORE) Act legislation through executive action. In addition to the Thompson Divide, this includes a Camp Hale-Continental Divide National Monument that would honor 10th Mountain Division veterans.

The executive action proposed for the Thompson Divide is a 20-year administrative mineral withdrawal. This means the U.S. Department of the Interior would begin a process that would stop any new oil and gas leasing in the entirety of the divide; this would proceed while the legislative process for a permanent withdrawal is completed. Right now, the White River National Forest portion of the divide is protected under the Forest Plan (Though, this protection is only temporary and could be removed), and the Gunnison National Forest portion remains unprotected. An administrative withdrawal is the same approach used by communities and the administration to protect land surrounding the Grand Canyon in Arizona, the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness in Minnesota and Chaco Canyon in New Mexico.

I deeply appreciate Sen. Bennet's leadership to protect the lands within the CORE Act and hard work to provide certainty for our local community — and all who love for and help steward the Thompson Divide — for the next 20 years. This certainty ensures our livelihoods can continue, our wildlife can prosper, and beloved places won't be sacrificed for short-term profit.

This proposed administrative withdrawal is an important step forward for the Thompson Divide. And, I know our leaders will keep fighting to pass the full CORE Act, which would permanently protect the divide and the other landscapes. I look forward to Pres. Biden acting promptly — we've worked so hard to build community support and would be honored to send an iconic "Unified for Thompson Divide" sign to our latest supporter at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

Jason Sewell is a rancher and the fifth-generation steward of Sunfire Ranch. He is a Board member of the Thompson Divide Coalition, whose mission is to secure permanent protection from oil and gas development on Federal lands in the Thompson Divide.

THE Durango HERALD

DH Opinion

<https://www.durangoherald.com/articles/our-view-honor-vets-with-camp-hale-monument/>

THE JOURNAL

<https://www.the-journal.com/articles/our-view-honor-vets-with-camp-hale-monument/>

Our View: Honor vets with Camp Hale monument

Wednesday, Sep 21, 2022 1:11

Camp Hale and the Tenmile Range, which produced the 10th Mountain Division with alpine soldiers who busted through German lines and changed the course of World War II, are in dire need of sturdier protection.

Camp Hale is included in the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act, but CORE stalled in Congress, no matter its bipartisan and public support, and historical, conservation and cultural values. Fortunately, top Colorado Democrats have taken swift, direct action by asking President Joe Biden to designate this special place as the Camp Hale – Continental Divide National Monument under the Antiquities Act.

This would be Biden's first national monument.

Sens. Michael Bennet and John Hickenlooper, and Gov. Jared Polis and U.S. Rep. Joe Neguse were right to prioritize Camp Hale last month. A monument that honors veterans is not only a nod to those who trained at Camp Hale, but in a sense, to all veterans.

Critics say it's a federal land grab that bars development, including mineral and energy extraction. But Camp Hale is too worthy to leave unprotected. It's on the National Register of Historic Places, but this doesn't protect it in perpetuity. Camp Hale's setting is an alpine wonderland. Its landscape is too unique, too precious. Its beauty makes it vulnerable to misuse.

Showing signs of wear, Camp Hale and its surrounding 28,000 acres are threatened by unmanaged recreation, vandalism and irresponsible four-wheeling.

Camp Hale turned out nearly 17,000 soldiers, pushed to limits while training in mountain warfare in high, steep terrain in temperatures that dropped to 30 degrees below zero Fahrenheit, in nearly 3 feet of snow and strong wind,

stinging and relentless. Later, when conditions were especially rough in the northern Appenine Mountains of Italy, soldiers there said they weren't as bad as Camp Hale, about 5,000 feet higher in elevation. Camp Hale's terrain was colder and more expansive, too.

That training paid off. In February 1945, the division's first offense included 10 hours of climbing – equal to a day's work at Camp Hale – toward the Gothic Line battle zone. Soldiers took Riva Ridge, a frozen fingerlike mountain range with snowy peaks and a river below. Next, they began the uphill assault on Monte Belvedere and Monte Gorgolesco. Commandeering German outposts and communications, and controlling mountains gave the division ground control.

To build Camp Hale, a valley was leveled, the Eagle River straightened and white structures constructed. Alongside U.S. Highway 24, the area is visually stunning. Shrubs, grasses and forbs, and forests of aspen, Douglas fir, spruce and lodgepole pine stand below sharp mountain peaks. Naturally, wildlife is abundant. The meadow is a developer's dream.

The U.S. Forest Service manages most land within Camp Hale's boundaries. And the Forest Service can trade parcels. It's happened before. Even if it's unlikely, the Forest Service could exchange Camp Hale for something else. This might seem outrageous now, but who knows in 20 years?

Like other modern battlefields, Camp Hale has hazardous material dumps and unexploded ordnance. A monument designation would initiate cleanup and remove hazards. It would prohibit future mining, too.

Soldiers from the division built Colorado's ski industry. But this monument isn't homage to that. It's to the power of this place and what the 10th Mountain Division's success meant around the world.

President Biden, please pick up your favorite pen and designate the Camp Hale – Continental Divide National Monument. It means a lot to a lot of people.



<https://coloradosun.com/2022/09/24/opinion-camp-hale-deserves-national-monument-designation/>

THE ASPEN TIMES

<https://www.aspentimes.com/opinion/noone-camp-hale-deserves-national-monument-designation/>

Opinion: Camp Hale deserves national monument designation

It's more than history. For veterans, it's a place of solace and rejuvenation



Bradley Noone

1:30 AM MDT on Sep 24, 2022

Sept. 21 marked the 10th anniversary of the designation of Chimney Rock, in southwest Colorado, as a national monument. Designated through the use of the Antiquities Act in 2012, this archaeological treasure is now preserved for future generations to reflect and make spiritual connections, learn from, and enjoy, while visiting with respect.

Protected public lands such as national monuments are an important part of Colorado and US identity and a driver of our tourism and outdoor recreation economy. The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis found that outdoor recreation contributed \$9.6 billion to Colorado's economy in 2020 alone. And according to Colorado College's 2022 Conservation in the West poll, more than 80 percent of Colorado voters support creating new protected lands.

Specifically, 86 percent of voters support designating a national monument at Camp Hale right outside of Leadville.

With this impressively broad support, it should be no surprise that Coloradans are calling on President Biden to designate a Camp Hale-Continental Divide National Monument. It would pay tribute to the 10th Mountain Division veterans who trained at Camp Hale and fought for our country – some of whom then returned home to found Colorado’s ski industry.

Today, the ski industry generates \$4.8 billion in annual economic output and supports more than 46,000 jobs and serves as an important backbone for many rural communities. The national-monument designation would also expand protections over surrounding lands of the Tenmile Range that beckon hikers and are home to some of Colorado’s most iconic wildlife.

But protecting Camp Hale holds real and deep personal meaning for me.

As a combat veteran, I know our public lands and waters offer a place of solace, resilience, and strength that can’t be found anywhere else. I was deployed to Afghanistan from 2006-2007 with the 10th Mountain Division (now based in New York), and, like many veterans and people who experienced trauma through combat, I returned as a different person. Camp Hale hasn’t been operational since World War II, yet Hale and the surrounding areas act as my therapist, my gym, my church, and my playground.

Spending time in nature – in places like Camp Hale and the Tenmile Range – has provided me with healing experiences that I cannot receive from medicine or through the VA. I know that I am not alone in this feeling. Veterans from all across the country are turning to protected places and the outdoors as a tool to help heal and to have productive and satisfying lives after all we have experienced.

That is why for years, I, along with small business owners, fellow veterans, local elected officials, and hunters and anglers, have been working to protect Camp Hale and its surrounding lands for future generations. For years, we have been coming together to craft a proposal that would honor our history

The Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy Act came out of years of community engagement and discussions that resulted in a proposal to conserve the San Juan Mountains, the Thompson Divide, Curecanti National Recreation Area, and Camp Hale and the Continental Divide. Current

protections for these areas do not do enough to limit these lands and waterways from mineral, lumber, and water extraction as well as housing development.

Though this legislation has passed the House five times, it has stalled in the Senate, despite strong local support. That is why I am joining U.S. Sens. Michael Bennet and John Hickenlooper, U.S. Rep. Joe Neguse, and Gov. Jared Polis in asking President Biden to designate the Camp Hale-Continental Divide National Monument, and to protect the Thompson Divide, the San Juan Mountains, and Curecanti through administrative protections until Congress can come together and pass this legislation. The overwhelming and diverse support for these protections have waited long enough.

Time is running out to honor the World War II veterans who helped make our country and our state what it is today. I urge President Biden to designate the Camp Hale-Continental Divide National Monument. It is time to honor the Greatest Generation and all those who served since and preserve this piece of living history forever and for all.

Bradley Noone lives in Salida.



COLORADO NEWSLINE

<https://coloradonewsline.com/2022/09/26/make-camp-hale-a-national-monument/>

Make Camp Hale a national monument
The designation would honor the 10th Mountain Division's
legacy. And it would help protect Colorado's freshwater
resources.



[SAMMY HERDMAN](#)

SEPTEMBER 26, 2022 5:00 AM



A view of the proposed Camp Hale National Historic Landscape in Colorado. (Mason Cummings/Courtesy of [The Wilderness Society](#))

The Camp Hale-Continental Divide is the [proposed site of a national monument](#) encompassing the historic site of Camp Hale and the area surrounding Colorado's Continental Divide.

As a former military base, the Army's 10th Mountain Division trained at Camp Hale during World War II. After training at [9,200 feet](#), the soldiers of the 10th Division were sent to the Apennine Mountains in Italy, where they fought [the battle of Riva Ridge, forcing the Axis forces into retreat](#). Throughout our state's history, the Continental Divide has [influenced the political and cultural landscape of Colorado and plays](#) a prominent role in providing water, the West's most precious resource, to the Southwestern United States.

On the Western slope of the Continental Divide, the watershed feeds into the Colorado River, which provides water to 40 million people. In fact, [much of our nation's water hails from Colorado's](#) Continental Divide, which is also the source of the mighty Arkansas and Rio Grande rivers. On the Eastern slope of the Continental Divide, every raindrop, spring and snowflake feeds into a watershed that quenches the thirsty and populous Front Range — and many more communities between Colorado and the Gulf of Mexico. As the Western U.S. is gripped by its [most severe megadrought in 1,200 years](#), we need to ensure strong protection for our freshwater resources.

The Continental Divide passes through the White River National Forest, placing that area under the management of the U.S. Forest Service. The national forest designation, however, doesn't necessarily protect land from damaging industrial activities, such as [oil and gas drilling, mining or grazing](#).

Designating the Camp Hale a national monument would prevent new leases for industrial activities that threaten our state's water quality.

Industrial activities can have severe impacts on Colorado's water quality. In 2016, oil and gas drilling equipment led to the [contamination of water wells in Colorado communities](#). In 2015, [3 million gallons of toxic, orange water](#) poured into Colorado's Animas River from an abandoned mining site. That same year, water pollution [killed 15,000 fish in Colorado's Republican River](#) when manure from a cattle feedlot overflowed into the river during a rainstorm.

Designating the Camp Hale a national monument would prevent new leases for industrial activities that threaten our state's water quality. Declaring the area a national monument would also bring the Biden administration closer to fulfilling its commitment to conserve [30% of the nation's land and waters](#) by 2030. Furthermore, President Joe Biden can declare the area as a national monument via the Antiquities Act rather than bipartisan legislation through Congress.

For the sake of our water, the legacy of our World War II veterans and the administration's 30×30 commitment, the president should designate Camp Hale-Continental Divide a national monument.