

Fitch, Abby

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Sent: Friday, June 28, 2024 1:30 PM
To: Public Comment
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Westminster Hills Open Space

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Hi,

I feel an urgent need to reach out regarding the proposition to rezone this green space and I hope this message reaches the correct individuals.

I live directly across from the park at 10557 Routt Lane, a home I purchased due to the proximity to the dog park because my first dog, Poppy, used to love being there. Since I bought my home in 2019, I have seen firsthand the environmental degradation at the park and have gone from someone who loved to be there to someone incredibly concerned about the destruction of a critical wildlife corridor. Watching the increase in use over the past years, I would like to be very clear that many of the individuals who go to the park are not citizens of Westminster county. I would also like to be clear that I believe there is a way to allow both the dog owners and environmental protection to coexist. Namely, minimize the size of the off leash area of the dog park. Do not completely remove that aspect as it is a wonderful place for a dog to run around. But similarly do not choose the rights of dog owners who may not even live in this county to trump environmental concerns. Have a piece of the park off leash and leave the rest as on leash pathways only use. It is this sort of compromise that is so important here.

I implore you not to give into the pressures of the many (and ask that you confirm that the dog park lobbyists are even your constituents before letting the sheer volume of folks sway your vote). It takes a strong person to stand up for what is right. But protecting our wildlife corridors is what is right. Do not rezone the park. Have volunteer docents watch over the park to make sure dog poop is being picked up and sensitive native habitat is not being trampled. Follow Boulder's lead and make it off leash only when dog is voice and sight trained - I have seen one too many dogs hit or almost hit by cars at the 105/Simms intersection over my fence to believe you have dogs interests in mind allowing the current free-for-all off leash dog park as it exists today - I can also attest to my dog being attacked by an off-leash-dog at the park who could not be called off and the injuries of which required my dog to go to the emergency vet - and I have seen numerous other dangerous dog fights because of the lack of any sort of precautions in place.

For the sake of the wildlife, for the sake of the dogs, and for the sake of the community- please consider this more before you make a giant change to the zoning of this park. Be strong enough to do what is right for all. Reduce the off leash area and put some restrictions in place to ensure the safety of the dogs and their owners.

Thank you.

Chelsea