PROPOSED LEGISLATION FAILS TO PROTECT CONTINENTAL DIVIDE LANDSCAPES

GOLDEN, Colo. (Jul. 24, 2019) – New legislation announced today by Rep. Scott Tipton falls short of public lands protections that Coloradans have been championing for over a decade. The proposal, released today as a “discussion draft,” contains some similarities to the Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy (CORE) Act, which already passed through the House Natural Resources Committee late last month - but fails to include widely supported protections on the Western Slope and surrounding the Continental Divide.

“It is disappointing to see the special landscapes of the Continental Divide - especially the historical treasure that is Camp Hale - ignored in any proposed legislation that purports to protect Colorado's public lands,” said Teresa Martinez, Executive Director of the Continental Divide Trail Coalition. “Veterans, county commissioners, and local business owners alike across Eagle and Summit Counties have spent years working to see these areas protected. With these areas seeing explosive population growth, failing to protect them now will adversely impact hikers, bikers, and other trail users fueling Colorado’s lucrative outdoor recreation economy for generations to come.”

The CORE Act, introduced this winter by Sen. Michael Bennet and Rep. Joe Neguse and co-sponsored by Reps. Jason Crow, Diana DeGette, and Ed Perlmutter, has strong support from a diverse group of Coloradans, including outdoor recreationists, veterans, elected officials from across the state, hunters and anglers, and hundreds of small businesses. The CORE Act would protect over 400,000 acres of public lands, waterways, and outdoor recreation opportunities in Colorado, including some of the Continental Divide’s most stunning landscapes. Approximately 20 miles of the congressionally-designated Continental Divide Trail pass through the CORE Act’s proposed Tenmile Recreation Management Area and Camp Hale National Historic Landscape - a brand new public lands designation that combines the mission of educating visitors with that of preserving terrain for outdoor recreation and ecological integrity.

“A generation of Coloradan veterans trained at Camp Hale, including my father,” said Greg Poschman, Pitkin County Commissioner. “The provisions in the CORE Act to protect this heritage and landscape of national importance are something that all members of Colorado’s congressional delegation should be able to support. I urge both Senator Gardner and Congressman Tipton to co-sponsor the CORE Act – it’s an important way to honor our veterans and protect an amazing piece of Colorado’s public lands.”

“Despite widespread support from a variety of their constituents, Representative Tipton and Senator Gardner have so far failed to support the CORE Act,” said Martinez. “While we appreciate this recognition by Representative Tipton of the importance of protecting public lands to the Colorado way of life, we encourage both him and Senator Gardner to lend their support and ideas to the already strong momentum behind the CORE Act, so that we can finally see protections for some of our state’s most inspiring places passed through Congress for the first time in decades."

About the Continental Divide Trail
The CDT is one of the world’s premiere long-distance trails, stretching 3,100 miles from Mexico to Canada along the Continental Divide. Designated by Congress in 1978, the CDT is the highest, most challenging...
and most remote of the 11 National Scenic Trails. It provides recreational opportunities ranging from hiking to horseback riding to hunting for thousands of visitors each year. While 95% of the CDT is located on public land, approximately 150 miles are still in need of protection.

About the Continental Divide Trail Coalition
The CDTC was founded in 2012 by volunteers and recreationists hoping to provide a unified voice for the Trail. Working hand-in-hand with the U.S. Forest Service and other federal land management agencies, the CDTC is a non-profit partner supporting stewardship of the CDT. The mission of the CDTC is to complete, promote and protect the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, a world-class national resource. For more information, please visit continentaldividetrail.org.

###