

**ISSUES SUBMITTAL FORM**

Date: 07/03/2025

<b>ISSUE:</b>	Should the Timed Entry Vehicle Reservation System at Eldorado Canyon State Park be modified to remove the 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm time slot?
<b>DISCUSSION (FACTS AND FIGURES, EXPLANATION OF ISSUE):</b>	
<p>Eldorado Canyon State Park implemented a Timed Entry Reservation System in 2022 to address park capacity and traffic issues in the community of Eldorado Springs. The Timed Entry System attempted to limit the number of users and vehicles in the park to address overcapacity and the resulting negative impacts on recreational experience, wildlife resources, and public or private property.</p> <p>May 15 through September 15, 2024, 9363 total reservations were made to enter Eldorado Canyon State Park. Reservations were made through IPAWS for a two hour window in which the reservation holder could enter the park with a vehicle starting at 5:30 a.m. through 5:30 p.m.</p> <p>The 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. timeslot had 725 reservations for 2024. This is compared to the 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. timeslot, which had 2302 reservations. In June 2024, 183 total vehicles were admitted between 3:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m., of which only 40 had a reservation. This means 78.3% of the vehicles did not have a reservation upon initial entry. When vehicles attempted to enter the park without the required reservation, staff would spend time educating these visitors on how to make a reservation which the visitor then had to go and make a reservation on their cell phones in order to enter the park. Most visitors waited until after 5:30 pm when reservations were not required to enter.</p> <p>Based on the 2024 data, the 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. time slot is the most visited time slot with the fewest reservations. Restricting entry and directing visitors to a reservation during this time slot has not proved necessary to meet the goal of the program and is a burden on staff time and frustrating for the public.</p> <p>Eldorado Canyon State Park seeks to remove the 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. reservation required time slot from the Timed Entry Vehicle Reservation System in regulation.</p>	
<b>STATE LAW REQUIRES CPW TO SOLICIT INPUT FROM STAKEHOLDERS THAT MAY BE AFFECTED POSITIVELY OR NEGATIVELY BY THE PROPOSED RULES. THE FOLLOWING STAKEHOLDERS HAVE BEEN ADVISED OF AND INVITED TO PROVIDE INPUT ON THE REGULATORY CHANGES PROPOSED IN THIS ISSUE PAPER:</b>	
<b>*IT IS ASSUMED THAT ALL NECESSARY INTERNAL PARTIES HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED*.</b>	
<b>[List stakeholder groups and briefly summarize comments received]</b>	
<p>Eldorado Springs Community, Kneale Road Subdivision, Boulder County Commissioners, CPW Commissioners, CPW NE Regional Leadership Team, Boulder City Parks and Opens Space, Boulder County Open Space and Mountain Parks, Boulder County Transportation, Colorado State Highway Department, CPW State Park Managers, Eldorado Canyon State Park Visitor Use Management Plan Stakeholder Group, Boulder Climbing Community, Action Committee for Eldorado, Access Fund, Flatirons Climbing Council, staff and visitors of Eldorado Canyon State Park.</p> <p>Summarized comments: From May 15 to September 15 2024 data shows a significant decline in park visitation from a high of 2302 vehicles in the 9:30-11:30 am entry slot to a low of 725 vehicles in the 3:30-5:30 pm entry slot.</p> <p>In a public comment questionnaire regarding timed entry parking limits, there were 230 respondents. 80% stated they had NO wait to enter the park and upon entry 90 % stated they did not feel the park</p>	

was congested. Overall, 39% of visitors rated their experience accessing the park as excellent, 40% rated it as good, 14% rated it as fair and 8% rated it as poor.

**ALTERNATIVES: (POSSIBLE OUTCOMES or POSSIBLE REGULATIONS):**

1. **\*Preferred Alternative\*: Update Chapter P-1 Regulation #100.D.10.d.**

During the period beginning May 1 through October 1 on every Saturday, Sunday and federal or state holiday, no motorized vehicle shall enter, park or use any facilities of Eldorado Canyon State Park from 5:30 am until ~~5:30 pm~~ 3:30 pm unless such use is by the authority of a valid day use reservation issued through the approved reservation system by Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

2. No change in current regulations.

<b>Issue Raised by:</b>	N. E. Region CPW Staff	
<b>Author of the issue paper (if different than person raising the issue):</b>	John Carson Park Manager Eldorado Canyon State Park	
<b>CC:</b>		
<b>APPROVED FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION BY:</b>	Mark Leslie	
<b>REQUIRES NEW SPACE IN THE BROCHURE?</b>	NO	
<b>ARE ADEQUATE STAFF AND FUNDING RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO IMPLEMENT?</b>	Yes	
<b>REGION, BRANCH, OR SECTION LEADING IMPLEMENTATION</b>	N.E. Region	
<b>RECOMMENDED FOR CONSENT AGENDA?</b>	Yes	

**ISSUES SUBMITTAL FORM**

Date: 07/03/2025

<b>ISSUE:</b>	Should the waterfowl hunting opportunities at Sweitzer Lake State Park that are managed through the Hunting Reservation System be expanded to the new areas and limit the amount of times people can reserve the blinds in a set period?
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**DISCUSSION (FACTS AND FIGURES, EXPLANATION OF ISSUE):**

The western slope has very few public land hunting opportunities, which cause great pressure on public lands that are available. The location and ease of hunting at Sweitzer Lake, makes it a very popular waterfowl hunting spot.

Waterfowl hunting at Sweitzer Lake is currently limited to six areas or "Hunt Zones". The Park's general regulation in Chapter P-1, Article 1, #100 (D) 40b only allows hunters to hunt in the six designated hunt zones. These areas are very popular and are used every weekend and almost every Wednesday until the lake freezes over in January and then continue to be used at more moderate levels through the end of waterfowl season.

Over the last four years, the park has expanded in size and is in the process of adding up to 27 acres of wetland areas. These areas are being designed for several purposes. They will be used for wildlife habitat, bird viewing areas, education events, and waterfowl hunting. When the area is done, it will provide prime waterfowl hunting opportunities. This area will need to be added to the hunting reservation system.

In the hunting year of 2024-2025 there were 39 days of hunting allowed at the park. During this time period, there were 24 days when the reservoir was not frozen over. When the reservoir is frozen over it limits hunting opportunities. Of those 24 days, six hunters reserved 68% of the available reservations. These six hunters have learned how to manipulate the Hunter Reservations system to their advantage. This has caused many hunters to not be able to hunt the park and complain to the park. The park is proposing that hunters only be allowed to make four reservations in a 25 day period during the waterfowl seasons. Many times the same 6 hunters that have the majority of reservations end up hunting out of the same blind together which leaves the one they reserved unoccupied. This has resulted in many complaints about there being no reservations available but when other hunters show up at the park only 2 or 3 of the blinds are actually being hunted out of. The new regulation will make hunters hunt the reserved hunting zone they reserved.

The park hosts tries to hold outreach, educational events, and youth hunts throughout the season. The park has to compete with other hunters for reservations dates, which limits how many events the park can hold. Allowing the park to close reservation dates on the hunt zones, will allow the park increase youth, mentor, and outreach events. Also, being able to close zones will allow the park to close site when there is a conflict between park operations and hunting safely.

The park would like to establish reservations through the hunting reservation system that expands the hunting zones and limits the number of reservations in a 25 day period. Currently there are three state wildlife areas that have reserve-able blinds that limit the number of times a hunter can reserve a hunting blind in a season.

**WHO ARE THE EXTERNAL PUBLICS IMPACTED BY THIS ISSUE? WHAT PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS HAS OCCURRED, IF ANY?**

**\*IT IS ASSUMED THAT ALL NECESSARTY INTERNAL PARTIES HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED\*.**

1) Waterfowl hunters often complain that the same hunter always gets the hunting zones. The park did send out messages on social media and received positive feedback about limiting the number of times

people can reserve zones and the expansion of the hunting zones. The park talked with hunters onsite and they agreed that limiting times is the best option.

**ALTERNATIVES: (POSSIBLE OUTCOMES or POSSIBLE REGULATIONS):**

\*Preferred Alternative\*:

Proposed Regulations: Chapter P-1 #100(D)(40)(b)

**Sweitzer Lake State Park**

- a) During the period beginning the Tuesday after Labor Day and continuing through the Friday prior to Memorial Day, only bows and arrows including crossbow and hand-held bow, unless otherwise restricted, and shotguns loaded with birdshot may be used for hunting during hunting seasons, and only in areas not posted as prohibiting such use.
- b) Waterfowl hunting is prohibited, except in the ~~six (6)~~ designated hunt zones.
- ~~c) From 5:00 am until 12:00 pm, reservations are required to hunt waterfowl in accordance with #504.I. Reserved zones which are unoccupied by 7:00 am will be available on a first come, first served basis. However, any hunt zone must be yielded at any time upon request of a hunter holding a valid and active reservation for that zone.~~
- ~~d)c) Reservations are not required to hunt waterfowl from 1:00 pm until sunset, and hunting is on a first come, first served basis. Waterfowl reservations are required and valid until sunrise. Hunters may check-in on a first come, first serve basis after a hunter checks out or after sunrise. A maximum of four (4) hunters allowed per hunting area.~~
- d) Leaving decoys overnight is prohibited.
- ~~e) Hunting reservation holders must be present while hunting and may only hunt the hunt area specified on the reservation. Hunters who wish to cancel a reservation must do so no later than 12:00 noon on the day before the hunt date. Failure to hunt a reserved area without prior cancellation, or following check station procedures, may cause forfeiture of the privilege to make reservations for the remainder of the hunting season.~~
- f) Reservations are limited to four (4) times in a 25 day period per hunter.
- g) The park can close the hunt zones reservation dates for park operations, public outreach, and education events.

Alternative 2 – Continue the current reservation system and not expand the hunting zones.

<b>Issue Raised by:</b>	<b>Scott Rist – Park Manager Sweitzer Lake State Park</b>
<b>Author of the issue paper (if different than person raising the issue):</b>	
<b>CC:</b>	<b>H. Kehm, S. Sinclair M. Thorpe</b>
<b>APPROVED FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION BY:</b>	<b>Cory Chick</b>
<b>REQUIRES NEW SPACE IN THE BROCHURE?</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>ARE ADEQUATE STAFF AND FUNDING RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO IMPLEMENT?</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>REGION, BRANCH, OR SECTION LEADING IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>SW Region</b>
<b>RECOMMENDED FOR CONSENT AGENDA?</b>	<b>YES</b>