

Testimony of Congressman Jared Polis
Committee on Natural Resources –
Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation
H.R. 2337, the Lake Hill Administrative Site Affordable Housing Act

July 19, 2013

Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Grijalva, and Members of the Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation, thank you this opportunity to testify in support of H.R. 2337, the Lake Hill Administrative Site Affordable Housing Act, a bill I was proud to author.

Before I begin, I would like to submit several letters of support to the record, including letters from Summit County, the Town of Frisco, the Town of Dillon, and Conservation Colorado. In addition, I would like to submit a map of the Lake Hill Site to the record.

This legislation is a result of a community-driven effort to create housing opportunities for people who work—but cannot afford to live—in Colorado mountain communities. Specifically, this bill would convey a 40-acre parcel in the White River National Forest known as the Lake Hill Site to Summit County, Colorado for fair market value. In turn, Summit County will develop the site for new affordable housing to support the growing recreation-based economy. Summit County will pay for all administrative costs associated with the conveyance. In addition, proceeds from the sale will go to much-needed capital improvement and maintenance of Forest Service facilities in Region 2 of the United States Forest Service.

This bill has received broad community support from the towns of Dillon and Frisco, Summit County, and local environmental organizations. After a month-long public comment process, Senators Mark Udall and Michael Bennet introduced a companion bill, S. 1305, on Tuesday, July 16th.

The Lake Hill Site was selected for this sale because it no longer has the character we expect from U.S. Forest Service land. The parcel sits between Interstate 70 to the north, the Dillon Dam Road to the south, and condominiums to the west, and as a result it is isolated from larger contiguous tracts of U.S. Forest Service land. In addition, the site is no longer used for recreation because it was heavily logged for fire mitigation and is impacted by unsightly water tank and utility lines. While the site is no longer suitable as National Forest land, it will provide a perfect setting for affordable housing. The property is located in the heart of Summit County between the towns of Frisco and Dillon and near free public transit. The affordable housing proposed for the Lake Hill Site will contribute to community growth and economic prosperity.

Thanks to members of this committee who provided meaningful input on this bill. I was also pleased to work closely with the US Forest Service, Summit County, local towns, and environmental groups to craft this legislation. I will continue to work with these stakeholders to ensure that this legislation will benefit the community and the U.S. Forest Service.

Thank you for your time.