

February 24, 2025



U.S. Senator Michael F. Bennet
Grand Junction Regional Office
225 N. 5th Street, Ste 511
Grand Junction, CO 81501

**City of Aspen Support for SHRED Act
Keep Ski Fees Local, Support National Forests**

As a home rule rural ski resort community surrounded by over 1,100 acres of open space federal BLM and White River National Forest Service lands, Aspen is “locally secured” and protected by taxpayer funded acquisitions. The White River National Forest is the most trafficked forest in the country consisting of 2.3 million, including 11 ski hills, eight wilderness areas and four large reservoirs that lean heavily on the recreation offered.

As introduced for the third time, this bipartisan, bicameral SHRED Act legislation is a charm. It is time to direct more funding into the forest with a plan that weighs record traffic and economic contributions alongside the ecological capacity of a stressed forest. Public lands encompass 88% of Pitkin County, which provide essential resources, landscapes, and a plethora of recreation opportunities. In turn, which supports the health and sustainability of our community, economy, and ecosystems.

Our ski town is in parallel alignment with the SHRED Act. The proposed framework and formula allocated for the retained ski area fee revenues would enable forests to retain 60% to 75% of the ski area fees collected inside their boundaries. This supports both the continued investment in winter operations and also year-round recreation management, including visitor services and facility maintenance in some of the busiest forests in our nation. It is our priority and ethical responsibility to collaborate regionally to preserve open space for recreational use, wildlife habitat, scenic view planes and sustainment of our agricultural heritage. Funding for adequate local management of our public lands will mitigate community impacts from natural disasters and ensure ecological health and biodiversity.

Conservation of land is an embodied Aspen principle. We advocate for sustainability and prioritization of climate and environmental action. Our community supports policy that delivers proactive forest management and wildfire mitigation. Additionally, the Aspen community supports federal lands management that balances recreation development and commercial uses with conservation, all while ensuring the long-term health and biodiversity of public lands and adequate funding for the Forest Service. This small step forward will allow ski fees paid in Colorado to stay here to support local programs and funding for equitable access to public spaces.

TORRE
Mayor, City of Aspen