

February 2, 2022

U.S. Board on Geographic Names
Colorado Geographic Naming Advisory Board
Colorado Congressional Delegation
Colorado State Legislature
Clear Creek County Board of County Commissioners

We write to support efforts to rename Mt. Evans and the Mt. Evans Wilderness. These areas are named after John Evans, who has been roundly condemned for his role in the Sand Creek massacre, and should be renamed.

As Governor of the Territory of Colorado, Evans supported raids targeting American Indians, issuing a proclamation to Coloradoans to “kill and destroy” Native Americans. In 1864, Evans facilitated one of the most brutal massacres in American history, the Sand Creek massacre, in which hundreds of men, women, and children were killed by a local militia under conditions created by Governor Evans.

Two Congressional committees and one military committee investigated the event, recognizing guilt on the part of the United States. Governor Evans was found culpable and was forced to resign in disgrace. A 2014 report by the University of Denver confirmed Evans’ culpability.

These places deserve a name which honors their natural and cultural values, rather than a perpetrator of atrocities against Native Americans. The Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribes have proposed renaming Mt. Evans as Mt. Blue Sky as it signifies the Arapaho as they were known as the Blue Sky People and the Cheyenne who have an annual ceremony of renewal of life called Blue Sky.

We support the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, and request your support for efforts to rename Mt. Evans and the Mt. Evans Wilderness as Mt. Blue Sky and the Mt. Blue Sky Wilderness. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

American Whitewater
Arkansas Valley Audubon Society
Audubon Rockies
Boulder County Audubon Society
Colorado Mountain Club
Colorado Sierra Club
Conservation Colorado
Defenders of Wildlife
Denver Audubon Society
EcoFlight
Evergreen Audubon Society

Great Old Broads for Wilderness
Great Old Broads for Wilderness, Mile High Broad Band
Great Old Broads for Wilderness, Northern San Juan Broad Band
High Country Conservation Advocates
Hispanics Enjoying Camping, Hunting, and the Outdoors (HECHO)
Information Network for Responsible Mining
National Audubon Society
National Parks Conservation Association
Next 100 Colorado
Quiet Use Coalition
Rocky Mountain Wild
San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council
Sheep Mountain Alliance
The Wilderness Society
Western Colorado Alliance
Western Resource Advocates
Western Slope Conservation Center
Wild Connections