

ENVIRONMENT

Chaffee County, where landscapes of surpassing natural beauty are home to populations of wildlife equal to any in the country, confronts the daunting challenge of preserving those assets while also fostering much-needed economic development. Chaffee County Democrats believe that development can take place without significantly impacting the views, wildlife, native flora, and **historical sites that give** our area its high quality of life and distinctive identity.

Therefore, Chaffee County Democrats support the following strategies, most of which are found in the Chaffee County Comprehensive Plan under Guiding Objectives 3 and 4:

Using incentives, conservation easements, and augmented development codes to protect

- critical wildlife habitat such as meadows, wetlands, and river and stream corridors
- sensitive natural areas and view corridors such as ridges and steep slopes
- our **starlit skies** from light pollution.

Codifying a process whereby all requests for development are referred to the Division of Wildlife for review and comment.

Enforcing weed control and revegetation of development sites through the County Weed Control Office.

Finding ways to keep agricultural land in production.

Adopting best-practice methods of protection against wildfire.

Assuring appropriate access to public lands.

Leaving open options for future rail service, for both local transportation and commercial use.

Coordinating economic development with environmental protection, e.g., developing a Watchable Wildlife Circuit in cooperation with Park County and the San Luis Valley, to extend the tourist season beyond the summer months.

Encouraging homeowners, businesses, and government agencies to conserve water, use energy-efficient devices, use alternative sources of energy—solar, in particular—where possible, and to recycle. **Recycling is important to conserve valuable natural resources and efficiently utilize landfill space.***

*Not in the Comprehensive Plan