

# Local Advocacy - Letter to the Editor Instructions

*Use the information below to draft and submit a letter to the editor for our local papers.*

[300-word limit]

## **Submit to:**

[Aspen Daily News](#)

[Aspen Times](#)

[Sopris Sun](#)

[Post Independent](#)

## **Key Ideas to Use:**

- Land management agencies like the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, and Bureau of Land Management have had dramatic budget and staffing cuts under the Trump administration.
- These agencies are responsible for:
  - Managing ecosystems and wildlife
  - Supporting rural economies
  - Providing equitable outdoor access
  - Protecting water sources and public health
- Locally, the White River National Forest staff has been reduced by 35%, which means: closed visitor centers, limited trail maintenance, fewer rangers, and growing fire risks.
  - For example, there will only be two wilderness crew members to maintain trails, remove trash and clean up human feces (down from 6)
- Long-term impacts include
  - Severe trail and ecosystem damage that may be impossible to repair
  - Rising wildfire danger due to lack of prevention and response
  - Loss of cultural sites and wildlife habitat
  - Economic harm to communities that rely on public lands
- Volunteers and nonprofits can help, but they can't replace trained professionals.
- Public lands need full federal funding and staffing to stay healthy, safe, and accessible.
- Talk to your friends, neighbors and family to raise awareness of this important issue.
- Even if you disagree on other issues, protecting public lands is bipartisan.
- These places belong to all of us and are paid for by American tax dollars.