A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF PITKIN COUNTY COLORADO, TO REQUEST THAT NO RECREATIONAL FEE BE IMPOSED ON FEDERAL LANDS UNDER THE RECREATIONAL FEE DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

WHEREAS, in 1996 Congress authorized the Recreational Fee Demonstration Program, which allows the United States Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to charge visitors daily and yearly fees for recreation on publicly owned land under their management; and

WHEREAS, the Recreational Fee Demonstration Program has been implemented on select public lands in Colorado, including the Maroon Bells in Pitkin County, and the program has been extended to include many more public lands throughout the state and nation, and to apply to other federal agencies; and

WHEREAS, even though Pitkin County has worked well with the local Forest Service on the Maroon Bells issues, the County still does not support the Fee Demonstration program; and

WHEREAS, recreational fees are a substitute for the obligation of Congress to fully fund the agencies that manage our public lands; and

WHEREAS, public land agencies have been underfunded and Congress should restore funding to these agencies and are a direct result of fiscally irresponsible budgets and policy, including but not limited to, the one-half trillion dollar deficit and tax cuts benefitting the wealthy; and

WHEREAS, the concept of paying Recreational Fee Demonstration Program fees to use public lands is contrary to the idea that public lands belong to the American people and are places where everyone is granted access and is welcome, a concept that has been and should remain in place; and

WHEREAS, national policy has held that our public lands, facilities and visitor services are national assets belonging to all Americans, and fee demo and privatization represent a complete overthrow of this long held tradition and source of pride; and

WHEREAS, the original intent of the Recreational Fee Demonstration program was to improve the public lands, public facilities, and visitor services, but instead the program has served to limit access to public lands and has garnered strong and widespread public criticism of the agencies imposing such fees; and

WHEREAS, while the controversy over the Recreational Fee Demonstration Program continues, the issues that the fees were meant to resolve, such as poorly signed trails, bridges in disrepair, and the scarcity of picnic areas and campsites, of which many are in disrepair or vandalized, remain inadequately addressed; and
WHEREAS, the purchase of a pass to enter public lands under the Recreational Fee Demonstration Program demonstrates support for the program, but the limited means of expressing opposition to the program raises the concern that some citizens may be deterred from visiting and enjoying public lands in Pitkin County and throughout Colorado and other states; and

Therefore, It Is Resolved by the Board of Commissioners of Pitkin County, that the Board of Commissioners recommends that the Recreational Fee Demonstration Program be abolished and that Congress fully fund all public land agencies and that no recreational fees be imposed on federal lands.

It Is Further Resolved, that copies of this resolution be sent to each member of the Colorado Congressional Delegation.


ATTEST:

BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS OF PITKIN
COUNTY, COLORADO

By: ____________________________  By: ______________________________
Deputy Clerk           Dorothea Farris, Chair