

Eagle Summit Wilderness Alliance: Whitney-Homestake Talking Points



- **No new dams in the Homestake Valley.** The Homestake Valley is an incredibly special place, filled with threatened wildlife, irreplaceable wetlands, and abundant recreational opportunities. It's no place for a new dam and reservoir.
- **Generations of activists have fought to protect the Homestake Valley.** Homestake II would have built a dam in the Holy Cross Wilderness but was successfully defeated by massive community outcry and legal action in the 1990s. The proposed Whitney Reservoir, aka Homestake III, is just the latest version of a bad idea.
- **Drilling test wells is just the first step in building a new dam and reservoir.** The US Forest Service failed to comply with the Endangered Species Act when it approved drilling test wells earlier this year; in early July, a coalition of [conservation groups announced](#) they are prepared to challenge this decision in court.
- **Protecting nature is a critical piece of addressing climate change.** The drilling and potential dam threaten riparian and wetland communities in the Homestake Valley, which sustain a high diversity of plant and wildlife species and are among the most ecologically productive landscapes in the high country.
- **Changing the Holy Cross Wilderness boundary is unacceptable.** It takes an Act of Congress to designate Wilderness - an incredibly high bar, intended to benefit all Americans in perpetuity - and changing boundaries so an alpine ecosystem can be flooded is unacceptable.
- **Fens are irreplaceable.** Fens, a special kind of wetland, take around 10,000 years to form and perform important purification functions in watersheds. The US Fish and Wildlife Service calls fens "irreplaceable," but US Forest Service maps are out of date and the agency did not seriously consider the impact on these wetlands when approving the drilling permit.
- **Recreational opportunities are at risk.** Year-round, responsible outdoor recreation is abundant in the towns near the Homestake Valley. It would be directly impacted by this misguided proposal, which threatens existing recreational uses like hiking, camping, fly fishing etc. and the nearby businesses that rely on activities.
- **Local communities are overwhelmingly opposed.** Hundreds of community members submitted letters in opposition to the drilling permit. Municipalities, elected officials, and local businesses are united in opposition.