

Fee Waiver Staff Report

Date:**To:** Douglas County Board of County Commissioners**Through:** Dan Avery, Deputy County Manager**From:** Steve Shoultz, CPRE, Director of Parks and Recreation**CC:** Amy Knopp, MSOL, Rueter-Hess Recreation Manager
Morgan Morehart, Parks Operations Manager
Nick Giauque, CPRP, Parks Programs Manager**Subject:** **Fee Waiver Request in the amount of \$200 for Denver Audubon / Denver Field Ornithologists at Rueter-Hess Reservoir**

Board of County Commissioners Hearing:**August 11, 2026 @ 1:30 p.m.**

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Denver Audubon and Denver Field Ornithologists request a fee waiver of \$200 for the use of Rueter-Hess Reservoir for a birding-by-water educational event on September 18, 2026.

II. BACKGROUND

Denver Audubon and Denver Field Ornithologists provide public education on birds and their ecosystems and contribute to citizen science through bird counts and species identification. The organizations lead bird hikes for the general public, including specialized outings such as birding by water. The planned event will be advertised on both organizations' websites and is capped at 20 participants to encourage general public attendance.

III. REQUEST

Denver Audubon and Denver Field Ornithologists are requesting a fee waiver of \$200 for 20 vehicle admission fees for the use of Rueter-Hess Reservoir for a birding-by-water educational event on September 18, 2026.

IV. STAFF ASSESSMENT

The Board of County Commissioners has the sole authority to waive or reduce all park use fees and may choose to waive or reduce the event fee of \$200 for Denver Audubon and Denver Field Ornithologists.

ATTACHMENTS**PAGE**

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Douglas County Board of County Commissioners
100 Third Street
Castle Rock, CO 80104

To Douglas County Board of County Commissioners:

This letter requests a fee waiver in the amount of \$200, which covers 20 entrance fees to Rueter-Hess Reservoir on September 18, 2026.

I am a member of both Denver Audubon (DA) and Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO). DA and DFO provide education to the public on birds and the various ecosystems in which they live. DA and DFO also contribute to citizen science in various bird counts/identification of bird species provided to scientific organizations.

In pursuing these goals, DA and DFO routinely lead bird hikes for the general public. Currently, I am planning a "bird hike" at Rueter-Hess Reservoir where we plan to bird using watercraft, identifying birds and observing them in their marine habitat, providing a unique educational and scientific perspective on shore birds and water birds that cannot be easily gained from hiking on land.

We will advertise our birding by water event on both DA's and DFO'S websites when we get closer to the September 18, 2026 planned event. We are capping the event at 20 persons. I am requesting the fee waiver to encourage members of the general public to attend and to provide relief for those who might otherwise choose not to attend because of the fee.

See more information about DA's and DFO's missions here:

<https://www.denveraudubon.org>; <https://dfobirds.org>.

Gratefully,

Robert Sanchez
Field Trip Leader - Denver Audubon // Denver Field Ornithologists
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