



Firearm Storage Maps: A Pragmatic Approach to Reduce Firearm Suicide During Times of Risk



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Background

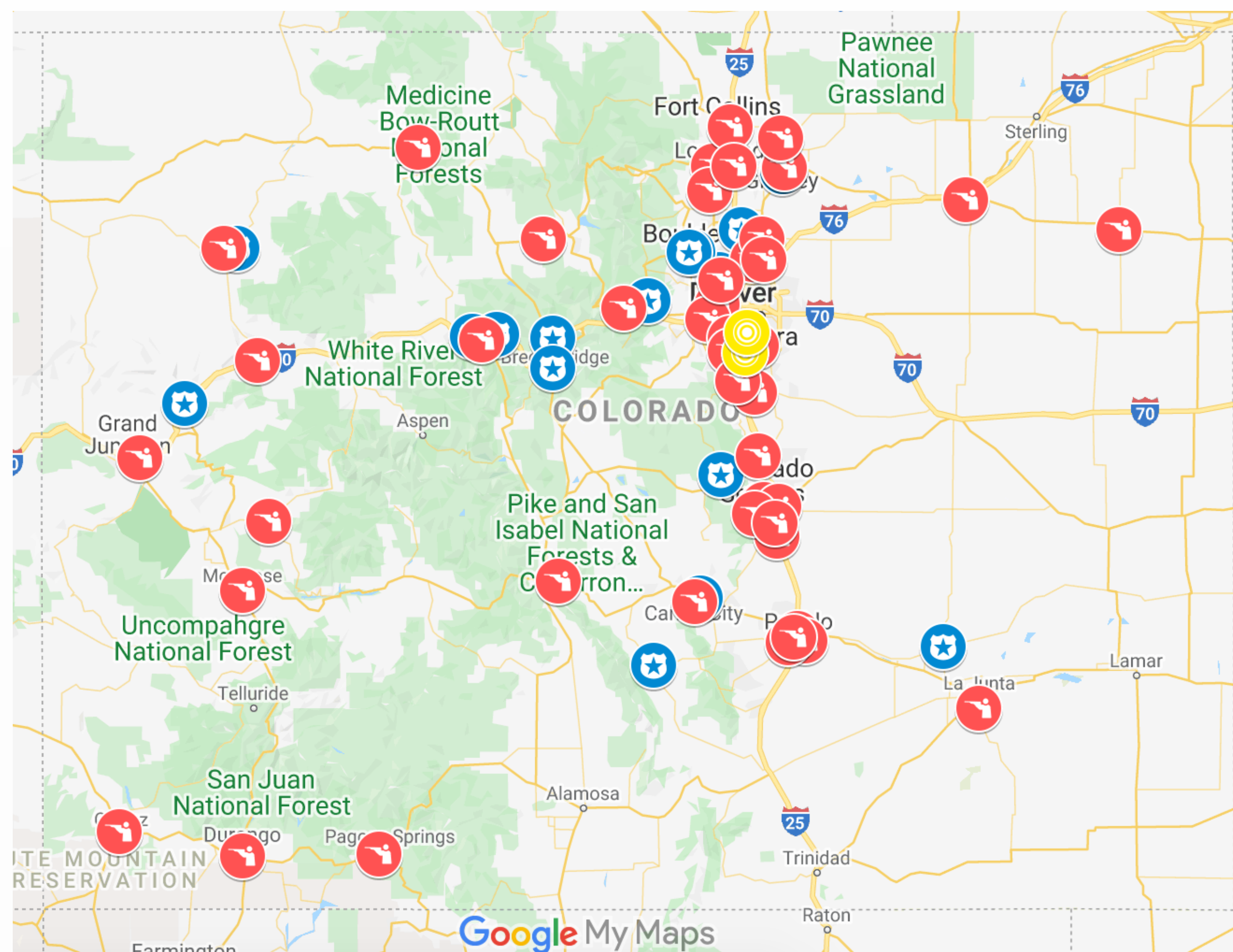
- Firearm ownership is associated with firearm suicide.¹
- Temporary out-of-home firearm storage, or lethal means counseling, is an evidence-based strategy to prevent firearm suicide.²
- Colorado has one of the nations highest suicide rates and firearms are involved in more than 50% of Colorado suicides.³
- There are substantial practical barriers towards finding options for out-of-home gun storage during periods of suicidal crisis.⁴

Methods

- The authors sought to create the first-of-its kind online map that lists locations that consider requests for voluntary firearm storage during periods of personal crisis.
- Gun shops and law enforcement agencies (LEAs) were contacted on behalf of the Colorado Firearm Safety Coalition, a non-partisan organization of physicians, public health practitioners, and gun shops owners committed to gun safety and suicide prevention.
- Colorado gun shops were aggregated through a targeted Google Maps search for 'gun shop(s),' 'firearms,' 'armory,' 'shooting range,' and 'firing range.'
- LEAs were identified through a purchased registry from Dunn & Bradstreet.
- Gun shops were contacted twice via phone during normal business hours.
- LEAs were contacted twice via email.
- The online map resource was built with publicly-accessible Google Maps software.

Online Map Resource

[Link: https://coloradofirearmsafetycoalition.org/gun-storage-map/](https://coloradofirearmsafetycoalition.org/gun-storage-map/)



Legend

Red pin = gun shop; Blue pin = LEA; Yellow pin = other

Results

- 471 gun shops and 215 LEAs in Colorado were contacted.
- In total, 61 locations agreed to be listed on the map.
- 46 (10%) of contacted gun shops and 15 (7%) of contacted LEAs agreed to be listed on the map.
- Since publication, 5 additional locations have asked to be added to the map.
- 32/64 (50%) of Colorado counties now have a listed location for temporary gun storage

Impact

- The online map has been viewed more than 37,000 times since publication in August 2019.⁵
- The map has been featured in numerous Colorado news outlets including *The Denver Post*, *The Colorado Gazette*, CPR, and KUNC.
- 11 other states are currently in the process of establishing gun storage maps for their states.
- Washington and Maryland recently became the 2nd and 3rd states in the nation to launch gun storage maps.

Conclusions

- Gun storage maps are a feasible approach to support lethal means counseling to reduce firearm suicide.
- Individual agencies or organizations can reasonably create gun storage maps on their own.
- Numerous barriers remain to temporary, voluntary out-of-home gun storage including concerns about liability, cost, and logistical ease.
- Future gun storage projects may benefit from increased legal clarification regarding the temporary transfer of firearms.
- Future research is needed to establish the exact impact that firearm storage maps have on firearm suicide.

Acknowledgments

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