



ARAPAHOE COUNTY

Proclamation

PROCLAMATION DECLARING NOVEMBER 29, 2025, AS A DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR THE SAND CREEK MASSACRE

WHEREAS, Arapahoe County proudly takes its name from the Arapaho people, one of the Indigenous nations who have called this region home for centuries, and we recognize our profound obligation to honor their history and acknowledge the injustices they have endured; and

WHEREAS, on November 29, 1864, approximately 675 to 700 U.S. troops under Colonel John M. Chivington launched an unprovoked surprise attack on a peaceful village of Cheyenne and Arapaho people camping along Sand Creek in southeastern Colorado Territory; and

WHEREAS, Chiefs Black Kettle, White Antelope, Left Hand and others were encamped with around 750 Arapaho and Cheyenne people, including families seeking peace, and the village displayed white flags and American flags as signs of their peaceful intentions; and

WHEREAS, this unprovoked attack resulted in the massacre of more than 230 Native Americans, most of whom were women, children, and elderly members of the community, in what stands as one of the most tragic and shameful events in Colorado's history; and

WHEREAS, the Sand Creek Massacre was a chief cause of subsequent conflicts between Native American tribes and the Federal government, destroying trust and hopes for peaceful coexistence that leaders like Chief Black Kettle had worked to achieve; and

WHEREAS, the Sand Creek Massacre represents not an isolated incident but rather part of a broader pattern of violence, displacement, and cultural genocide perpetrated against Indigenous peoples throughout Colorado and the American West, the impacts of which continue to affect Indigenous communities today through ongoing disparities in health, education, economic opportunity, and the preservation of cultural practices and languages; and

WHEREAS, on April 28, 2007, the U.S. Secretary of the Interior dedicated the Sand Creek Massacre National History Site, which was established under an Act of Congress in 2000; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, the State of Colorado offered a public apology for its role in the Sand Creek massacre and created the Sand Creek Massacre Commemoration Commission to increase public awareness about this vital part of Colorado's history; and

WHEREAS, Arapahoe County sought to formalize a relationship with the Northern Arapaho Tribe in 2020, culminating in a historic Memorandum of Agreement adopted in 2022 that outlines how the County will work with the Tribe in meaningful ways; and

WHEREAS, in 2025, there are concerning attempts to revise the American story by omitting or minimizing its painful chapters, and recognizing that those who fail to engage with our full shared history risk repeating past harms; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners is committed to deepening the County's relationship with the Tribe and our collaborative efforts to support ongoing public education about the Sand Creek Massacre so that future generations can learn from our past and heal from this devastating event.

NOW THEREFORE, The Arapahoe County Board of Commissioners do hereby proclaim November 29, 2025, as **Sand Creek Massacre Commemoration Day** and encourage all people to join us in this observance, and learn more about the Cheyenne and Arapaho people who lost their lives during the Sand Creek Massacre and honor their descendants.

Commissioner Carrie Warren-Gully

Commissioner Jessica Campbell

Commissioner Leslie Summey
Chair of the Board

Commissioner Jeff Baker
Chair Pro Tem

Commissioner Rhonda Fields