

# Upper Colorado River Conservation & Recreation Project



# Project Vision

- In 2011 Eagle County and The Conservation Fund recognized the enormous conservation values and recreational potential of the Upper Colorado River.
- Colorado River travels for 45 miles from State Bridge to Dotsero
- Section upstream from State Bridge receives 60,000 user days per year according to BLM, while downstream from State Bridge receives fewer than 5,000
- Project area was identified by Colorado Conservation Partnership as being among top 25 statewide priority areas
- Project area largely surrounded by BLM Special Rec. Mgmt. Area

# Project Goals Outlined in 2011

- Significantly expand public access to the Colorado River by acquiring strategic boat launch sites
- Protect critical habitat along the river and between existing protected areas (Flat Tops Wilderness/Bull Gulch Wilderness Study Area)
- Protect scenic viewshed along Colorado River Road and from nearby public lands
- Provide access to the Colorado River via the Eagle Valley Regional Trail
- Protect working ranches and historic resources along the Colorado River

# What has been accomplished thusfar: State Bridge Landing purchased



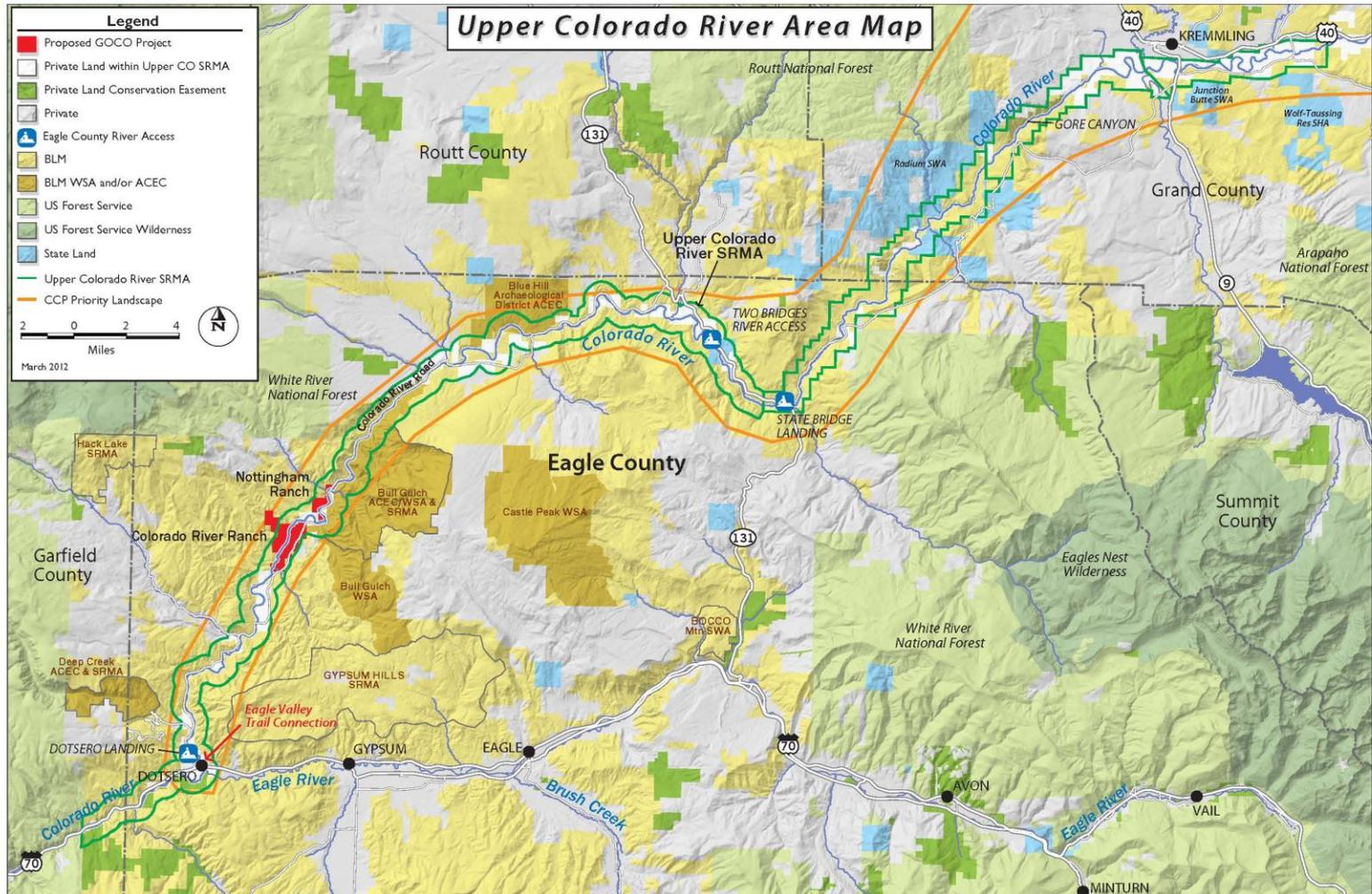
# Two Bridges River Access



# Dotsero Landing



# Project Area Map



# Colorado River Ranch



Colorado River Ranch is 1,017 acres and is the largest remaining ranch in the Upper Colorado Conservation & Recreation Project Area and within the BLM Special Recreation Management Area.

# A River Runs Through It



Two miles on both sides, to be exact.

# CRR contains excellent wildlife habitat for terrestrial, avian, and aquatic species



- Critical elk winter range and calving areas
- Bighorn sheep
- Mountain lion
- Colorado River cutthroat trout
- Roundtail chub
- Mule deer migration corridor
- Bald eagle and Peregrine falcon

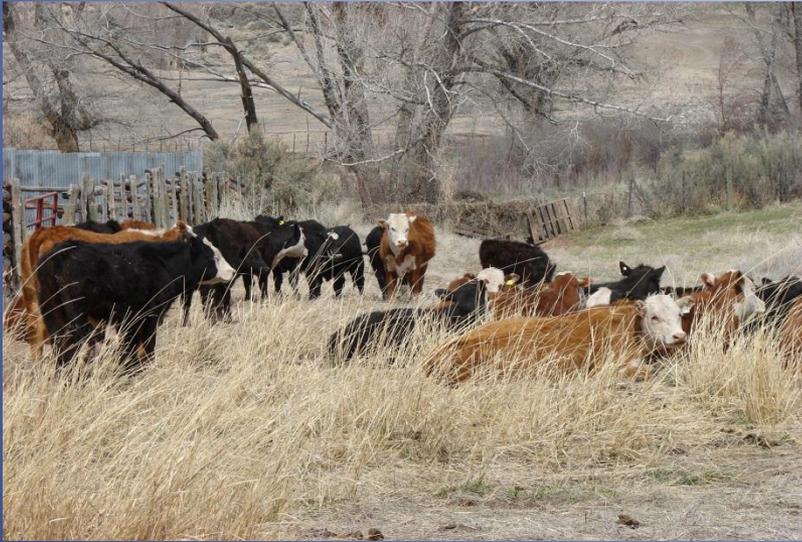


# Diverse habitat types

- Riparian Areas (2 miles of Colorado River)
- Meadows and pastures
- Craggy canyons and rocky outcrops
- Pinyon Juniper
- Sagebrush and prairie



# Colorado River Ranch to remain working ranch



Producing certified organic hay and cattle

Colorado River Ranch is highly visible to the public travelling on Colorado River Road and Amtrak passengers who pass through the property



# Spectacular geology



# Very senior water rights to be tied to conservation easement



# Contiguity to federal lands to west



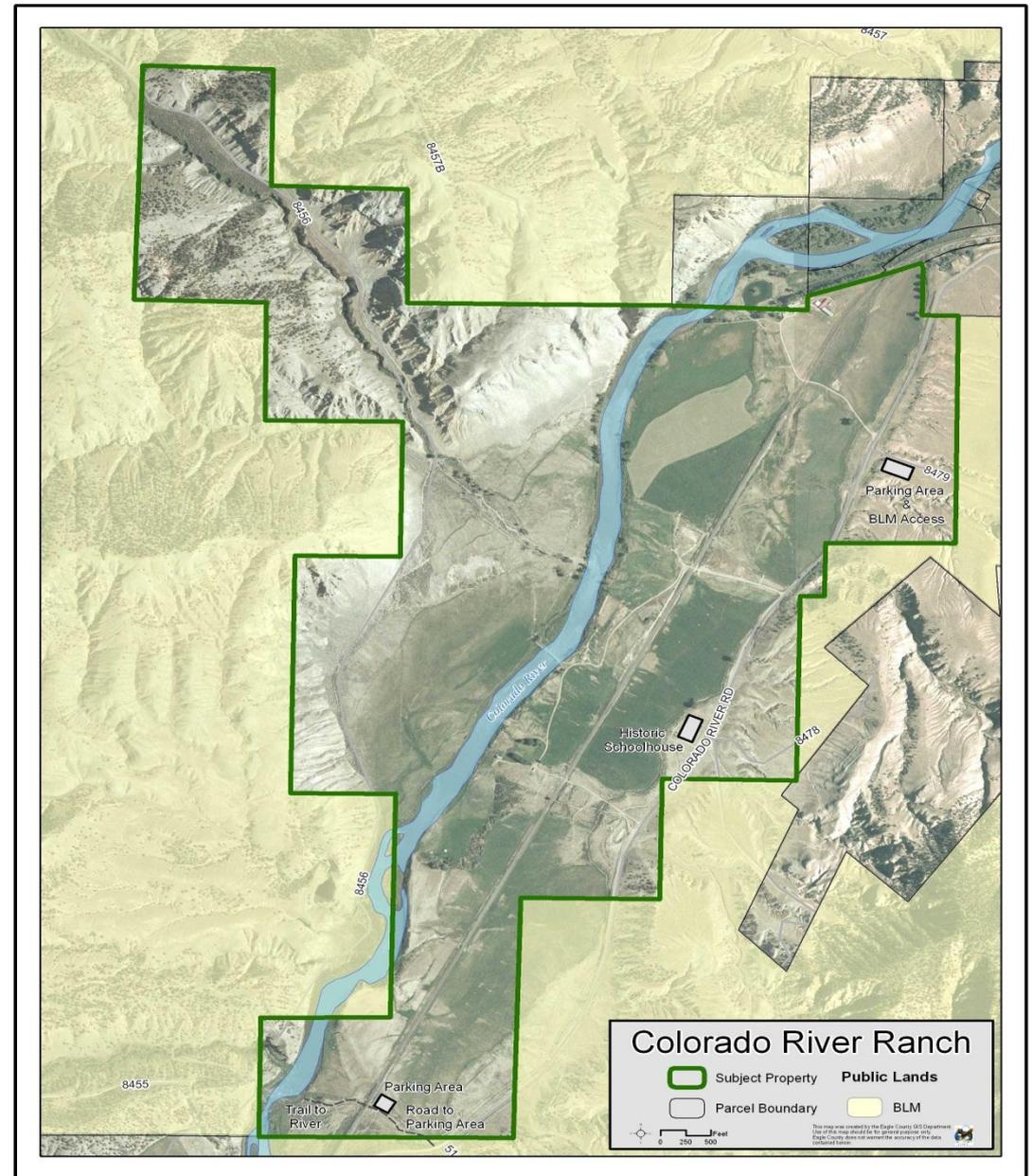
Flat Tops Wilderness looms over Colorado River Ranch

...and to the east – Bull Gulch WSA



# Public Access

- Colorado River Boat Launch Access (seasonally open to duck hunting)
- Bull Gulch WSA Parking/Staging area
- Colorado River Schoolhouse



# Public Access – Three Points



Boat Launch Site at South End of Colorado River Ranch

# Bull Gulch Parking/Staging Area



Two acre parking site

# Colorado River Ranch Schoolhouse

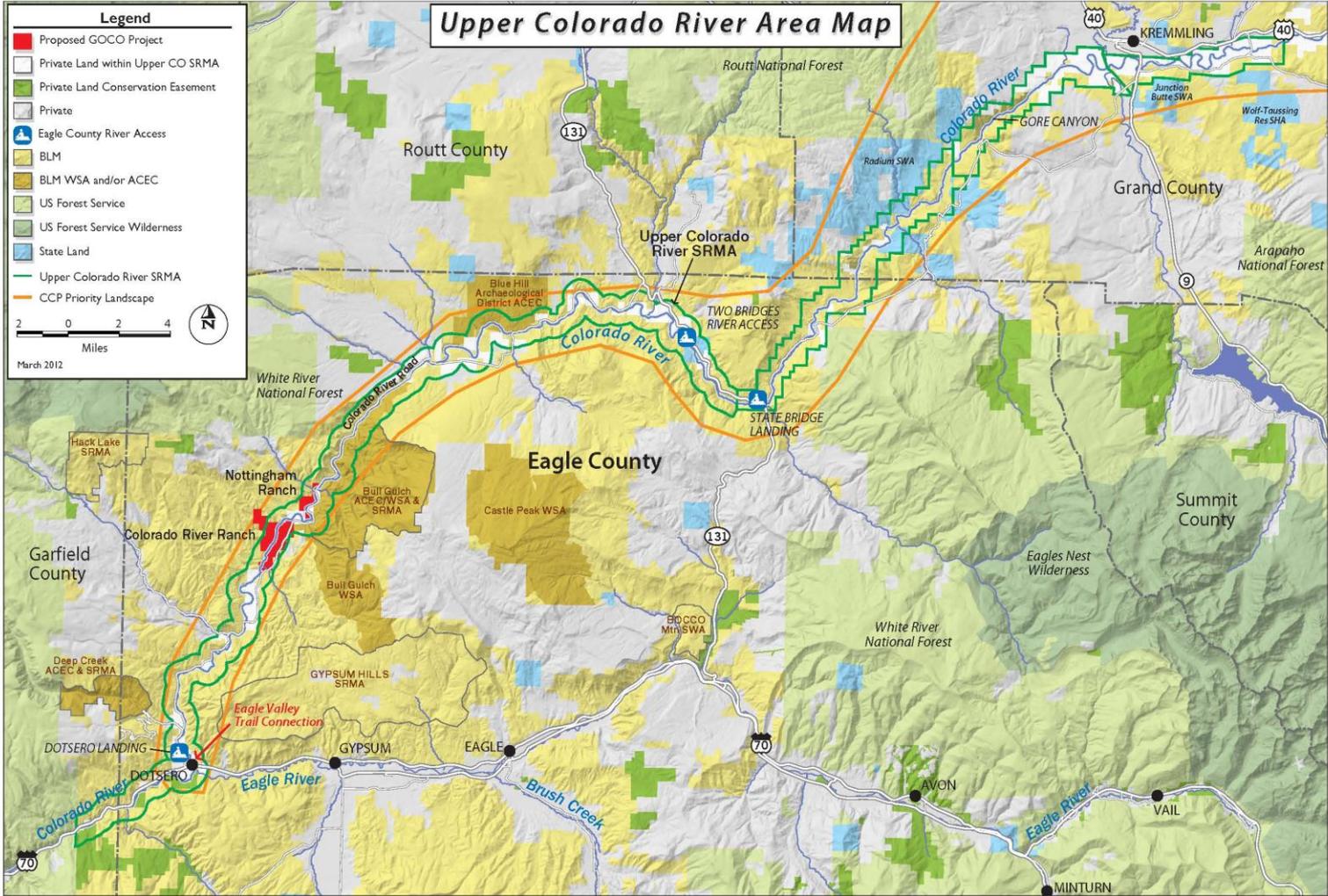


Historic Schoolhouse open to public

# Colorado River Ranch Summary

- 1,017 acre ranch to be protected by conservation easement to Colorado Open Lands, (CE terms already agreed upon)
- Two miles of Colorado River Frontage on both sides
- Property to remain working ranch producing organic hay and cattle
- Excellent wildlife habitat and wildlife movement corridors
- Contiguity to significant federal lands
- Highly visible from public road, public lands, and Colorado River
- Public access to Colorado River, BLM Bull Gulch Wilderness Study Area, and historic schoolhouse
- Ranch will only allow one additional homesite or lodge within 70-acre building envelope.
- Property already under contract

# Project Area Map

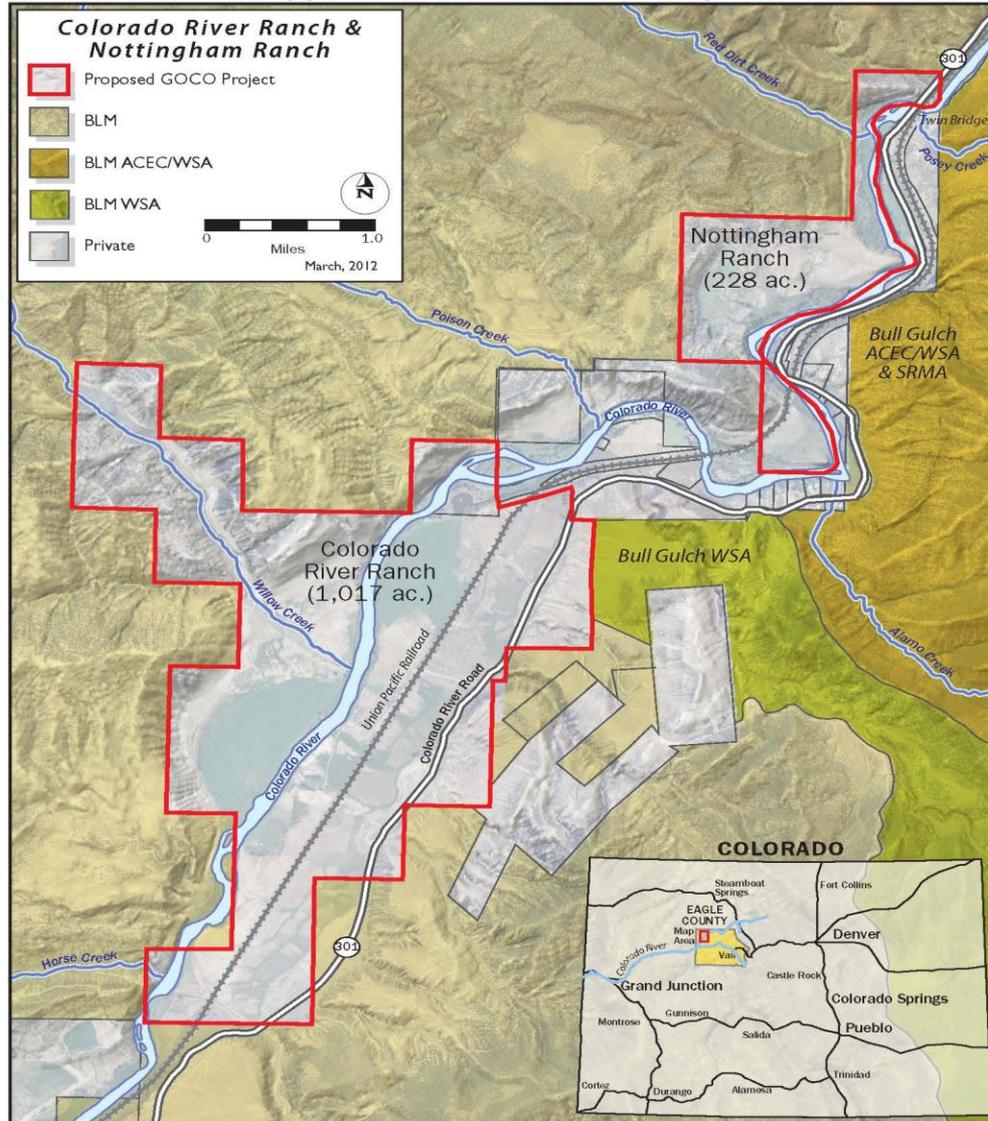


# Nottingham – Red Dirt Parcel



# Site Map

## Upper Colorado River Site Map



A river runs through it, also...



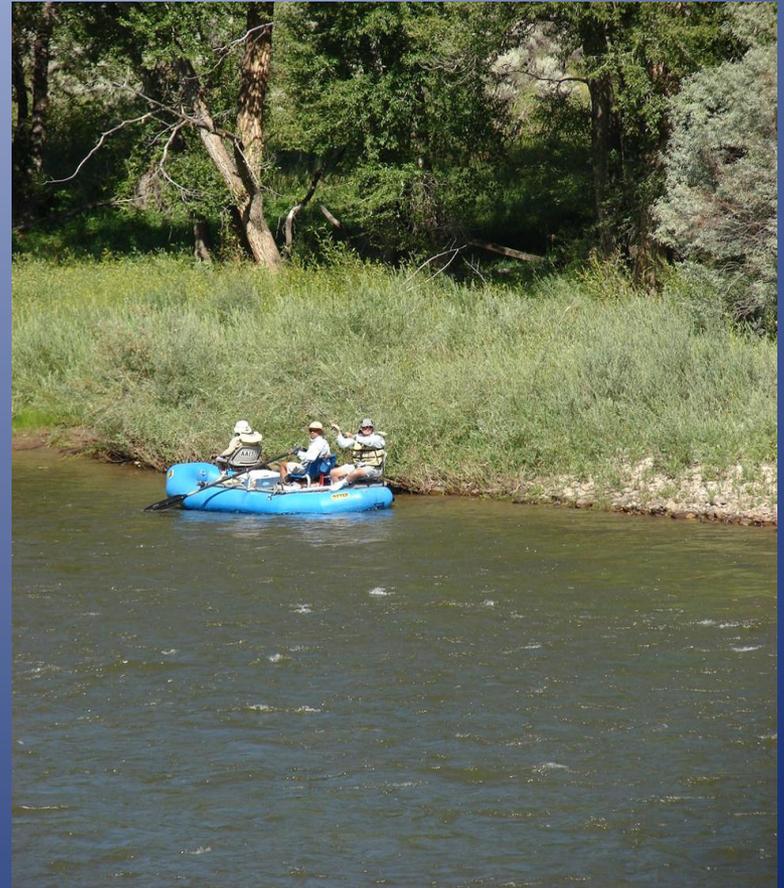
For two spectacular miles

# Excellent Wildlife Habitat

- According to Colorado Parks and Wildlife District Wildlife Manager Nottingham:
- Contains critical habitat for numerous species (bear, mountain lion, elk, turkey, peregrine falcon, golden eagle, bald eagle, mule deer, bighorn, numerous other aquatic and avian species)
- Provides important wildlife movement corridors from east to west, as well as along the Colorado River
  - Also provides critical mule deer winter range
    - Important because of contiguity to BLM
  - Two miles of intact river front and riparian area
    - Red Dirt Creek tributary and confluence

# Outdoor recreation benefits for youth and families

- Fishing/canoeing/rafting/intertubing
- Primitive camping
- Hiking
- Access to adjacent BLM lands for hunting



# Historic Cabins



# Water Rights



1 CFS from Red Dirt Creek will be tied to land

# Agricultural use continued



# Scenic view shed from Colorado River, Colorado River Road and nearby federal lands



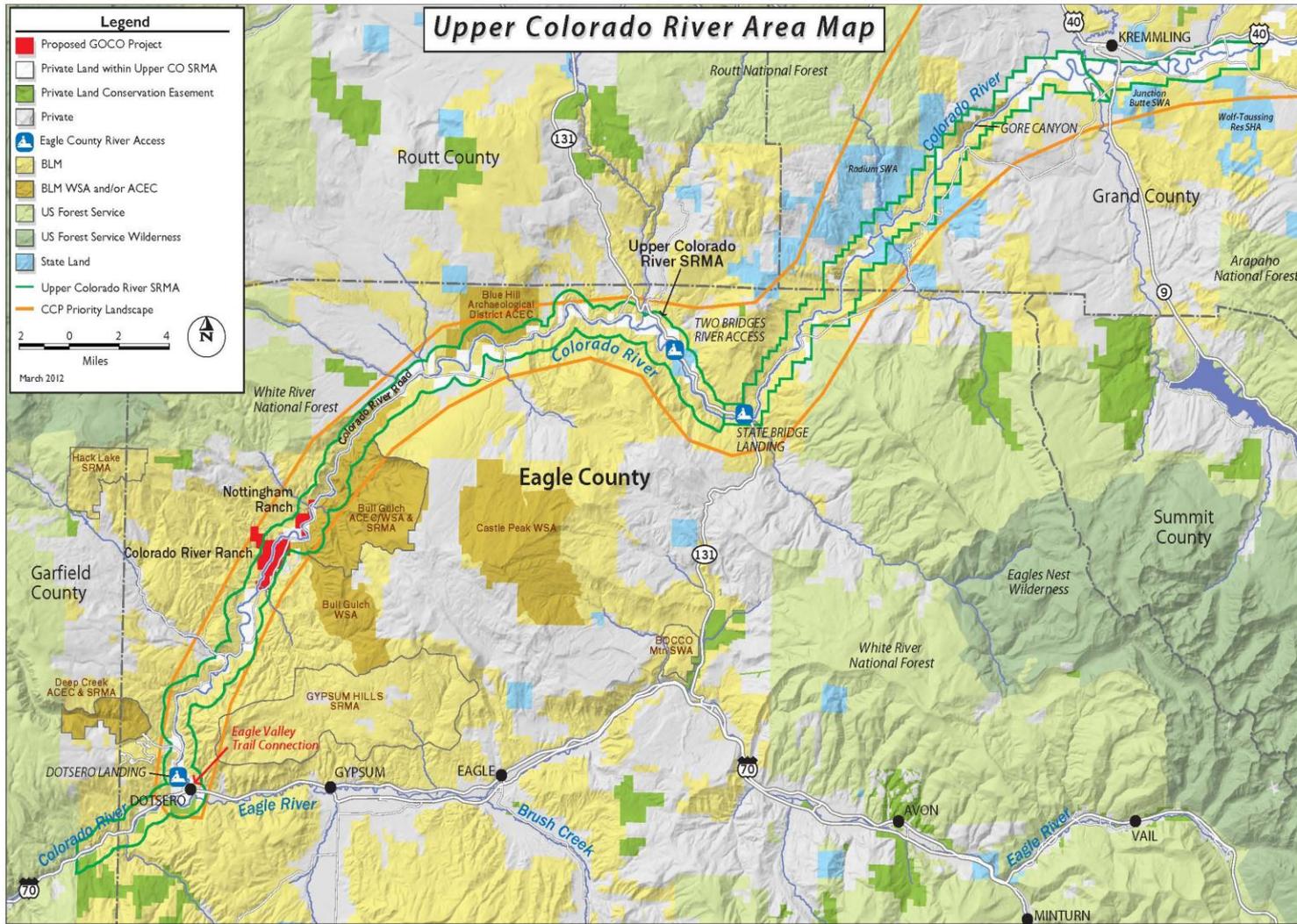
# Prominent geology



# Nottingham-Red Dirt Parcel Summary

- 228 acre fee-title purchase
- Property will likely be managed through cooperative agreement with BLM (similar to previously acquired parcels)
- Excellent wildlife habitat and wildlife movement corridors
- Two miles of Colorado River Frontage
- Public access via driveway and Colorado River
- Recreation access for primitive camping, fishing, and hiking
- Historic structures to be maintained
- Water rights tied to title (1 CFS)
- High visibility
- Agricultural use to be maintained via 4H

# Project Area Map



# Project enjoys support

- Bureau of Land Management
- Colorado Conservation Partnership
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife
- Trout Unlimited
- Colorado Open Lands
- Town of Gypsum
- Eagle Valley Land Trust
- Eagle River Watershed Council
- Union Pacific Railroad
- Colorado Department of Transportation
- Two Rivers Metro District
- American Rivers
- River Guides and Outfitters

- Big bold vision for the Colorado River!

