



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: David Boyd, Public Affairs Specialist (970) 876-9008
Steven Hall, Director of Communications (303) 239-3672

BLM announces decision approving Sutey Ranch land exchange

SILT, Colo. – Today the Bureau of Land Management announced its decision to approve the Sutey Ranch Land Exchange in Eagle, Garfield, and Pitkin counties, initiating a 45-day protest period.

“The Sutey Ranch Land Exchange provides a substantial public benefit by conserving lands for wildlife, providing opportunities for recreation, and consolidating land ownership,” said Steve Bennett, field manager of the BLM’s Colorado River Valley Field Office.

The exchange is the result of a proposal brought to the BLM by the Western Land Group, and through extensive local coordination has received broad public support. Under the exchange, the American public would acquire the 557-acre Sutey Ranch adjacent to the popular Red Hill Special Recreation Area in Garfield County, including the historic water rights from the ranch. The public would also receive 112 acres in Pitkin County along Prince Creek Road adjacent to The Crown area. This 112-acre parcel is a highly popular area with mountain bikers and is used to access existing public roads and trails managed by the BLM.

The BLM would exchange three parcels totaling 1,268 acres in Pitkin County south of Carbondale that are mostly surrounded by private land and are difficult for the public to access. These parcels would be transferred to the Two Shoes Ranch. In Eagle County, BLM would also exchange three parcels totaling 201 acres on Horse Mountain that have little public access. These parcels are southwest of Eagle, Colo., and would be transferred to Lady Belle Partnership, L.L.L.P.

The land exchange proponents intend to place conservation easements on those lands transferred out of Federal ownership preventing development from occurring on those lands. They will also contribute a \$1.1 million donation – \$100,000 to cover the BLM’s cost to develop a site-specific management plan for the newly acquired parcels, and \$1 million for their long-term management.

The land exchange is not complete until the close of the protest period and any protests received are resolved.

The notice of decision, final environmental assessment, maps of parcels, legal descriptions, land appraisals and how to file a protest are available at <http://www.blm.gov/co/crvfo>. Protests need to be received by Aug. 4, 2014.

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