

News Release

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BLM acquires 4,139-acre Emerald Mountain parcel

CRAIG, Colo. – The public gained access to the 4,139-acre Emerald Mountain parcel west of Steamboat Springs yesterday after the Bureau of Land Management formally closed on a land exchange that brings the parcel under its management.

“We’ve been working towards this for a number of years,” said John Husband, Field Manager of the BLM Little Snake Field Office in Craig, which will manage the parcel. “Emerald Mountain is now public land that will be enjoyed for generations to come.”

For now, public access on Emerald Mountain will be limited to day-use, foot travel only, and all dogs must be leashed. These provisions will remain in place to protect the area’s resource values in the interim until a detailed recreation plan for the area is completed.

The recreation plan will be developed within several months in cooperation with the Emerald Mountain Partnership, City of Steamboat Springs and other partners. BLM will manage Emerald Mountain as a Special Recreation Management Area with two zones, each targeting different non-motorized recreation opportunities. One zone will emphasize strenuous outdoor activities including mountain biking and cross-country skiing. The other zone will emphasize wildlife viewing, hiking, horseback riding, and hunting.

In exchange for 123 isolated parcels in Routt County totaling 15,416 acres, BLM acquired the Emerald Mountain parcel from the Colorado State Land Board, which had slated the property for sale to generate revenue for public schools. The majority of BLM parcels exchanged had no public access. Through a multi-party exchange facilitated by the Western Land Group, the BLM parcels will be sold to private landowners and the revenue will go to the State Land Board to benefit public schools.

The BLM lands exchanged will primarily be sold to the livestock permittees in the area and will continue to be grazed. Grazing will also continue at Emerald Mountain.

For more information about Emerald Mountain, visit the Little Snake Field Office web site at www.co.blm.gov/lusra or call the BLM Little Snake Field Office at 970-826-5000.

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