



News Release

Kremmling Field Office, Colorado

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BLM invites public to comment on Blue Valley Land Exchange proposal *Proposal could increase access for hunting and fishing in Grand and Summit Counties*

KREMMLING, Colo. — In keeping with the Administration’s goals of increasing public access for hunting, fishing and other recreation, the Bureau of Land Management is considering the Blue Valley Land Exchange in Grand and Summit Counties. Today, the BLM released the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for this proposal, which initiates a 45-day public comment period.

“The BLM values diverse views, and we are looking forward to this next step of public engagement,” said Colorado Acting State Director Greg Shoop. “The input we receive will help us determine whether this exchange is in the public’s interest.”

Under the proposal, the BLM would exchange nine parcels totaling 1,489 acres of federal land in Grand County for nine parcels totaling 1,830 acres of non-federal, private land in Grand and Summit Counties. In this case, the BLM would gain more land than it would exchange; however, based on the appraisal, these parcels are equal in value.

The proposed exchange would result in the BLM and members of the public gaining access to nearly a mile of Blue River frontage near the confluence with the Colorado River, plus an additional 1.66 miles of river frontage that is currently inaccessible except by floating. In addition, 300 acres of the exchange would be within the boundaries of the White River National Forest, which is administered by the U.S. Forest Service. In return, the BLM would relinquish title to 400 acres of land that provides 0.3 miles of walk-in Blue River fishing access near Trough Road. More than half of the BLM acreage that would be exchanged is surrounded by private land and has no public

access. The majority of the other BLM-managed public lands considered for exchange are small, isolated parcels that receive little public use.

The proponent of the proposed land exchange, Blue Valley Ranch, would also fund several improvements on public land, including facilities for float-boaters on the Blue River near the confluence with the Colorado River. Facilities consist of a new take-out for raft and kayaks, wheelchair-accessible fishing platforms, trails, and parking areas, among others.

“It is important for the BLM to receive public feedback because the Bureau will only complete this proposed exchange if we determine it is in the public’s interest,” Shoop said. “We are considering this exchange because of the potential to increase public access and important big-game winter range on public lands.”

The BLM will host two public open house meetings to answer questions, provide more information and take written comments. The first will occur on June 4 in Silverthorne at the Summit County Library North Branch, 651 Center Circle; the second will be June 6 in Kremmling at the Grand County Fairgrounds Extension Office, 210 11th Street. Both meetings will run from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. The public can stop by anytime during the open houses.

More information about the proposed land exchange, including maps, is available online at <https://go.usa.gov/xnBJ5>.

The BLM must receive comments by June 25. Comments may be submitted to kfo_webmail@blm.gov, faxed to 970-724-3066, or mailed to P.O. Box 68, Kremmling, CO 80459.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

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The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land located primarily in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The agency’s mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and

productivity of America's public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. Diverse activities authorized on these lands generated \$75 billion in sales of goods and services throughout the American economy in fiscal year 2016 - more than any other agency in the Department of the Interior. These activities supported more than 372,000 jobs.