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First name: James

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To whom it may concern:

I am writing to enthusiastically endorse the exchange of Federal and Non-Federal lands between Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp and the Pike-San Isabel National Forests & Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands as proposed by the Locke Park Land Exchange.

As bishop of the Rocky Mountain Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, I can testify to the impact of Rainbow Trail's work in the lives of countless young people and families, not only from Colorado, but from many states. The ability that this land exchange will provide to Rainbow Trail to not only continue its operations and programs for the foreseeable future, but to expand its capacity for programming, is incalculable. Rainbow Trail has proven to be a thoughtful steward of its land and properties, paying careful attention not only to the ministry it can provide in this amazing outdoor setting, but tending as well to the natural habitat and wildlife.

This land exchange would not only benefit Rainbow Trail but would benefit all those who wish to enjoy the natural beauty of Colorado. The exchange provides the public with access to forest lands that are home to the diverse and unique flora and fauna present in this part of southern Colorado, while making it easier to protect and enhance the habitat on what is now the Non-Federal Parcel. The conservation easement that Rainbow Trail agrees to provide on the Federal Parcel to Colorado Open Lands reflects the camp's commitment to shared values of conservation with the National Forest System.

This exchange is truly a win-win for all involved. I strongly encourage its adoption.

Sincerely,

Rev James Gonia

Bishop, Rocky Mountain Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America