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Organization: Title:

Comments: I am supporting this land exchange as I believe it is a win-win. First, it fills in a hole in the US Forest in the Locke Mountain area, allowing for better habitat management, protecting prime lynx habitat, and adding more protection to the headwaters of Newlin Creek, which supplies water to the City of Florence. It should also reduce the expense of accommodating the non-federal property surrounded by federal land. And secondly, it guarantees that the Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp (RTLC) can and will continue operating for many generations to come. There are already many privately owned buildings on the federal piece, currently leased by RTLC. And each year thousands of kids attend this camp. Another issue is with the camp sitting inside federal land, people wanting to use the forest, and not understanding they are inside a camp operated by the Rocky Mountain Synod, each year there are instances where people pull into the camp, not understanding what is going on, intending to stay. By going through with the land exchange, that should be eliminated, while the USFS will still keep road 198 open to allow access to Ballman Reservoir, Rainbow Lake, and other points west. RTLC has been a good neighbor to the Wet Mountain Community over the years, hosting annual Thanksgiving Dinners free to the local community as well as other interactions. I would anticipate that RTLC would continue to work with neighbors under this proposed land exchange, too.