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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to support this land exchange. Creating federal land in the Locke Mountain area allows for the support of habitat for the lynx and protects Newlin Creek which supplies water to the city of Florence. Creating private land for the Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp (RTLCL) allows them to continue operating into the future. Every year, children, families and adults attend various camp sessions and retreats, enjoying and learning to respect the beautiful land in and outside of the current camp grounds. While being surrounded by federal land has its advantages, expanding the camp itself only makes sense as there are often people entering the camp thinking it is part of federal land. The exchange allows for making the boundaries more clear while making more consistent space for the camp itself. The public still has access through road 198 to their primary areas of interest which include Ballman Reservoir, Rainbow Lake and other hiking and hunting. Additionally, if this exchange is completed, RTLCL will be entering into a conservation easement through Colorado Open Lands to ensure the protection of the beautiful natural land in its current state and serving as a buffer to the federal lands. It should also be noted that RTLCL actively works to maintain positive relationships with the surrounding neighbors and community to include consideration of their rural agricultural lifestyle as well as tourism efforts such as DarkSky International. Every year the camp puts on a Thanksgiving dinner that is free to the surrounding neighbors and community. The event is well attended and appreciated. It also creates a positive base for future conversations between the camp and their neighbors.