



News Release

--FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE--

August 4, 2008

Adjustments to BLM's Land for Water Trade Proposal

MONTE VISTA – The Bureau of Land Management is seeking comment on a revised proposal to exchange up to ten parcels of BLM land for up to 189.8 acre feet of water annually from the Anderson Ditch in Monte Vista. Four parcels located in Rio Grande County that were in the original proposal have been replaced by four parcels located in Saguache County.

The purpose of the proposed exchange is to acquire a permanent source of augmentation water for the Blanca Wetlands. The acquired water would be used to offset depletions to the Rio Grande caused by the operation of confined aquifer wells that supply water to the wetlands. Securing a permanent source of augmentation water is critical as Blanca Wetlands provides habitat for more than a dozen threatened, endangered, or sensitive species. The wetlands also provide nesting and migratory habitat for thousands of waterfowl and shorebirds.

The land parcels proposed for exchange were previously identified as eligible for disposal or exchange in BLM's San Luis Resource Management Plan. The number and acreage of land parcels that will ultimately be exchanged will consider resource values, including wildlife habitat, open space and cultural resources.

For more information about the proposed exchange, please see the BLM's website at www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/slvplc.html or contact Sue Swift-Miller, La Jara Field Office, at 719-274-8971; or Tom Malecek, Divide Field Office, at 719-657-3321.

Written comments should be mailed before September 12, 2008 to Sue Swift-Miller, La Jara Field Office, 15571 County Road T-5, La Jara, CO 81140; or faxed to Sue Swift-Miller at 719-274-6301.

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