



News Release

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests &
Thunder Basin National Grassland
<http://fs.usda.gov/mbr>

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Forest Service Receives Land Donation in California Park

(STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, Colo.) Jan. 11, 2013 – On Dec. 28, 2012, Routt County recorded a Donation Deed for 120 acres to the United States in California Park, Routt National Forest. The donated acreage is in a valley, surrounded by National Forest and Colorado State land, with sagebrush hillsides and wide creek-bottom land. Two creeks, Armstrong and Elkhead, converge on the property and Routt County Road 80 (Forest Road 150.1) passes through it.

The Hahns Peak/Bears Ears (HPBE) Ranger District had been working with the private landowner to exchange or buy the inholding within California Park. The landowner had expressed desire for the Forest to own the land and ultimately decided to donate the property.

The National Forest System lands surrounding this inholding are designated through the 1997 Routt National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan as the California Park Special Interest Area (SIA), due to the diversity of the historical and biological resources values present. These values include pre-historic archaeological finds, homesteads and cabins, and historic stock driveways. The parcel will be managed to protect or enhance the characteristics of the SIA.

Protecting habitat for all biological species found in the area will be a management focus, including emphasis on populations of boreal toad, Colorado River cutthroat trout, Columbia sharp-tail, greater sage-grouse, greater sandhill crane, mountain sucker and northern leopard frog.

The property includes approximately 14 acres of wetlands associated with Armstrong and Elkhead Creeks. Federal ownership of this parcel ensures the unified management of one of the highest value watersheds on the HPBE Ranger District. The acquisition also protects the high-quality scenery of the corridor, and will protect the California Park SIA from the impacts of potential private development on the property.

Ultimately this land acquisition is in the public interest and meets goals, objectives and policies identified in the Routt National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.

For more information contact the HPBE Ranger District at (970) 870-2299 or visit our website at <http://fs.usda.gov/mbr>.

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