

SB 92-202 Cash-Funded Capital Construction Request

Colorado State University

Snow Mountain Ranch Conservation Easements (202 Project)

PROGRAM PLAN STATUS

2010-105

Approved Program Plan?

Yes

Date Approved:

April 22, 2009

PROJECT REQUEST AND COST ITEMIZATION INFORMATION

<u>Fund Source</u>	<u>FY 2009-10 Request</u>	<u>Cost Item</u>	<u>FY 2009-10 Request</u>
CF	\$1,000,000	Land Acquisition	\$6,000,000
FF	\$5,000,000	Professional Services	\$0
		Construction	\$0
		Equipment	\$0
		Miscellaneous	\$0
Total	\$6,000,000	Total	\$6,000,000

SUMMARY

Colorado State University (CSU) is requesting cash and federal funds spending authority to purchase two conservation easements totaling 2,787 acres at Snow Mountain Ranch. Snow Mountain Ranch is a year-round conference and family center owned and operated by the YMCA of the Rockies that provides lodging, meeting space, dining, programming, and recreation for up to 2,500 people. The ranch occupies about 5,000 acres near Winter Park. Attachment A is a map of the proposed easements. The easements will protect back-country forest land from future subdivision and development.

According to the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS), Snow Mountain Ranch was designated as the highest priority in Colorado for funding for FY 2008-09 under the federal Forest Legacy Program. The easements are contiguous and border the Arapahoe National Forest to the west and the south. Access to the national forest is through the proposed easements. According to various stakeholders, the purchase of the conservation easements will protect two watersheds, and winter range for elk, mule deer, black bear, moose, mountain lion, and the Canada lynx. Furthermore, CSU says that continued active forest management of the easements will promote forest health and reduce the risk of loss from fire, insects, and disease.

The CSFS is the lead state agency for the federal Forest Legacy Program. The CSU Board of Governors will hold legal title to the easements because the CSFS is part of the CSU system. The Colorado Commission on Higher Education is required to approve all property acquisitions by institutions that require federal funds pursuant to Section 23-1-106 (8), C.R.S.

The CSFS will have access to the property to ensure that the property owner manages the property in accordance with the forest stewardship plan. Operating costs for these monitoring activities are expected to range from \$1,193 in the first year to \$1,343 in the fifth year.

The project is a Senate Bill 92-202 project, meaning the property will be acquired, monitored, and maintained with non-state funds.

Attachment B contains letters of support for the easement acquisitions from Senator Dan Gibbs and Representative Al White; the U.S. Forest Service Sulphur Area District Ranger; the U.S. Bureau of Land Management Kremmling Office Field Manager; the Colorado State Forest Service Granby District Forester; Jeff Jahnke, the State Forester of Colorado; the Colorado Division of Wildlife Hot Sulphur Springs Area Wildlife Manager; the Town of Fraser Board of Trustees; the Mayor of the Town of Fraser; the Town of Granby Board of Trustees; the Mayor of the Town of Winter Park; and the Executive Director of the Middle Park Land Trustees.

SB 92-202 Cash-Funded Capital Construction Request

Colorado State University

Snow Mountain Ranch Conservation Easements (202 Project)

FUNDING SOURCE

The U.S. Forest Service has awarded grants totaling \$2.5 million for the Snow Mountain Ranch easements to the Colorado State Forest Service under the federal Forest Legacy Program. According to CSU, another \$2.5 million is anticipated to be awarded in FY 2009-10 under the federal Forest Legacy Program for the easements. These grants, along with a 25 percent match of \$1.0 million from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), as awarded to the Conservation Fund, will pay for the conservation easements. The property owners will also donate \$3.7 million in easement value. CSU anticipates completing the acquisition by June 2011.

STAFF QUESTIONS AND ISSUES

1. Will there be public access to the easements for hunting, fishing, and/or wildlife viewing?

No right of access by the general public to any portion of the Property is conveyed by the Easement. However, the conservation easement property is already accessible, physically and legally, from County Road 53 which traverses the entire Snow Mountain Ranch. Visitors do not have to be members or guests of the YMCA to access the Snow Mountain Ranch, and the conservation easement allows for continued accessibility to an extensive network of trails on Snow Mountain Ranch for hiking, world-class cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding and biking. The public also crosses Snow Mountain Ranch on County Road 53 to access the adjacent national forest lands for hunting, camping and other recreational activities.

2. Does the property owner currently maintain any structures on the parcels?

Yes. A 220,000 gallon underground water storage tank and a small pump house nearby.

3. Will the YMCA of the Rockies be able to build additional structures if needed in the future at Snow Mountain Ranch?

Yes. YMCA of the Rockies may build "small recreational structures" such as small primitive camp sites and picnic shelters and "temporary/moveable structures" such as tent platforms and yurts. YMCA of the Rockies must construct or place these structures in a manner which does not adversely impact the conservation values of the property. No other structures, permanent or temporary, shall be constructed on the property conveyed in the Conservation Easement. Note that the substantial existing footprint of lodging and guest service structures is excluded from the area to be encumbered by the conservation easement, and it is the YMCA's intent to concentrate future development on the portion of the property that is excluded from the conservation easement.

4. How are these parcels used by the Snow Mountain Ranch guests and staff?

The Property will continue to be available for use by guests of Snow Mountain Ranch and the general public for passive recreational uses such as hiking, horseback riding, snow-shoeing, cross-country skiing, and picnicking. No motorized recreational activities are allowed. Existing roads may be used by guests for automobile touring and scenic/wildlife viewing. The YMCA of the Rockies is a flagship organization within the nation's 20 million-member YMCA movement. Snow Mountain Ranch's unique setting in the Rocky Mountains allows the YMCA to serve some 4,500 children and their families annually with their outdoor education programs.

5. How will operating and maintenance expenses be paid for future Colorado State Forest Service monitoring activities?

The easements will be monitored in conjunction with other CSFS forest administration activities. The USFS awards funds to CSFS for such purposes. The additional cost for the Forest Legacy Program monitoring will be minimal and there is very little risk to CSFS that it will be required to find other sources of funds to monitor the easements. Should that occur, CSFS is prepared to support the administrative costs through non-state funds. In addition, CSFS has established an endowment with the CSU Foundation for the purpose of providing a source of funds for monitoring easements.

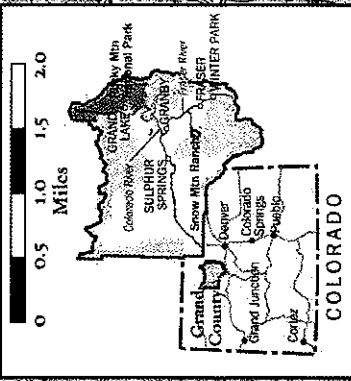
YMCA of the Rockies
Snow Mountain Ranch
 Grand County, Colorado

- Legend**
- National Forest
 - Bureau of Land Management
 - State
 - Private with conservation easement
 - Property Boundary
 - Conservation Easement (2,786 acres)

Phase Two: =1,146 acres

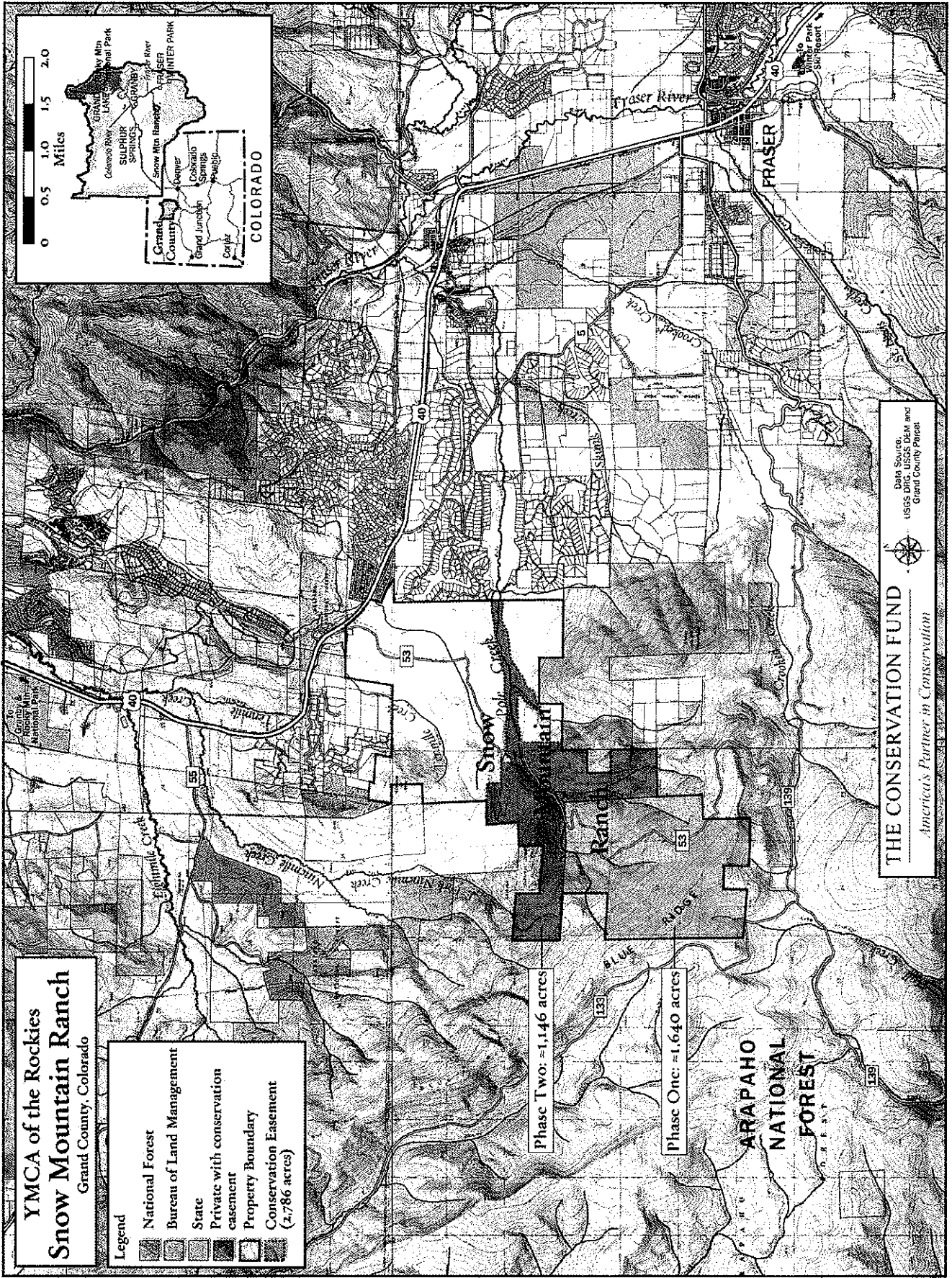
Phase One: =1,640 acres

ARAPAHO NATIONAL FOREST



THE CONSERVATION FUND
America's Partner in Conservation

Partly funded by:
 USGS BLM USGS DAM and
 Grand County Patrol



APPENDIX C – Support Letters



DAN GIBBS
SENATE DISTRICT 18

STATE CAPITOL BUILDING, ROOM 132
200 E. COLFAX AVENUE
DENVER, COLORADO 80203
CAPITOL: 303-866-4873
FAX: 303-866-4843

Email: dan.gibbs.senate@state.co.us

Senate Chamber
State of Colorado
Denver

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
CHAIR

AGRICULTURE, & NATURAL
RESOURCES COMMITTEE
MEMBER

January 7, 2009

Mr. Joe Duda
Forest Legacy Program Manager
CSU-Colorado State Forest
5080 Campus Delivery
Ft Collins, CO 80523-5080

Re: Snow Mountain Ranch, Grand County, Colorado

Dear Joe

Please accept this letter of support for your agency's efforts, working with the YMCA of the Rockies and The Conservation Fund, to conserve 2,800 acres of forested back-country on the Snow Mountain Ranch through the Forest Legacy Program. This is an opportunity to protect one of Colorado's most notable properties in an area that is threatened by rapid development.

The Forest Legacy program is crucial to enabling private landowners, such as the YMCA of the Rockies, to actively respond to the challenges brought on by the Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic. Throughout decades of ownership, the YMCA has practiced responsible and collaborative forest management on the Snow Mountain Ranch. More recently, they have modeled "best practices" for managing Colorado's beetle-damaged forests and establishing the next generation of healthy forest.

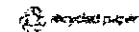
The proposed perpetual Forest Legacy conservation easement on Snow Mountain Ranch will establish a 2,800-acre buffer along 8 miles and thousands of acres of the Arapahoe National Forest. Preventing residential development along this forest boundary is a major step toward mitigating the threat and cost of wildfires in this area, and toward promoting sound forest management on a landscape scale. The easement will also protect the upper watershed of Pole Creek, which provides senior water rights for the Town of Granby, and supplies water for the YMCA's own facilities on Snow Mountain Ranch.

Snow Mountain Ranch provides wildlife movement corridors, and winter range and wildlife resting areas for elk and mule deer, black bear, moose, and mountain lion, as well as habitat for the Canada lynx, a species of State and federal concern. The easement allows for continued accessibility to over 50 miles of existing trails on Snow Mountain Ranch for hiking, cross-country skiing, snow shoeing, horseback riding and biking, and enhances the YMCA's ability to continue its valuable outdoor educational programs for youth.

I applaud your agency's interest in protecting the forests and other natural resources on Snow Mountain Ranch with a conservation easement through the Forest Legacy program, keeping Snow Mountain Ranch intact as a retreat for families, and available for outdoor education and recreation.

Very truly yours,

Dan Gibbs
State Senator



State Representative
AL WHITE
P. O. Box 1627
Hyden, CO 81639
Cell: 303-866-2317
Capitol: 303-866-2949
Fax: 303-866-2218
E-mail: al.white.house@state.co.us



Member:
Appropriations Committee
Joint Budget Committee

COLORADO
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
DENVER
80203

March 10, 2008

Board of Directors
Great Outdoors Colorado Trust Fund
1600 Broadway, Suite 1650
Denver, CO 80202

Re: Snow Mountain Ranch, Grand County, Colorado

Dear Members of the Board:

The YMCA of the Rockies' Snow Mountain Ranch is one of Colorado's most popular and well-loved destinations. That is why I enthusiastically support The Conservation Fund's application to GOCO for funding to purchase a conservation easement on the Snow Mountain Ranch.

Snow Mountain Ranch distinguishes the YMCA of the Rockies from all other YMCAs in the country by its majestic Rocky Mountain setting where youth, families, and conference groups are connected with nature. Snow Mountain Ranch attracts thousands of visitors each year, making it an important economic and educational resource for the surrounding communities of Granby, Winter Park and Fraser, and the State of Colorado. The proposed easement will allow the public to continue to enjoy hiking, cross-country skiing, horseback riding and biking on Snow Mountain Ranch's extensive network of trails. The property contains the upper Pole Creek watershed, as well as migration corridors and important habitat for wildlife, which will also be protected.

In response to damage from the Mountain Pine Beetle, the YMCA of the Rockies has removed dead trees to protect water sources and recreational trails, and planted new trees to establish the next generation of healthy forest on Snow Mountain Ranch. The proposed conservation easement enables these favorable management practices to continue, thus maintaining the health of the Pole Creek watershed and mitigating the threat of wildfires.

I applaud the YMCA of the Rockies' commitment to protecting the natural resources on Snow Mountain Ranch and urge your favorable consideration of this project for funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Al White".

Al White
House District 57



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Sulphur
Ranger District

9 Ten Mile Drive
P.O. Box 10
Granby, CO 80446
Voice: (970) 887-4100 TDD: (970) 887-4101
Web: www.fs.fed.us/r2/acrf
Fax: (970) 887-4102

File Code: 1560

Date: JUL 19 2001

Mr. Joseph A. Duda
Colorado Forestry Legacy Program
Colorado State Forest Service
5060 Campus Delivery
Fort Collins, CO 80523-5060

Dear Mr. Duda,

I am writing in support of The Conservation Fund's application for Forest Legacy funds to acquire a conservation easement on approximately 2,950 acres of the Snow Mountain Ranch in Grand County, Colorado, owned by the YMCA of the Rockies. This is an opportunity to protect the forested lands at higher elevation on the Snow Mountain Ranch, along with the Ten Mile Creek and Pole Creek corridors

The YMCA of the Rockies has worked extensively with the U.S. Forest Service to actively manage their forested lands. At present, this includes addressing the devastation caused by the Mountain Pine Beetle throughout Grand County. The YMCA is practicing sound forest management to reduce the hazard of wildfires and protect the quality of the Ten Mile Creek and Pole Creek water supplies. Through the removal of beetle-killed trees, and substantial reseedling efforts, they are renewing healthy forests on their property for future generations.

The proposed conservation easement borders the Arapaho National Forest for several miles on the west and south. Large, forested properties such as this are increasingly being carved up into 35-acre home sites. The chance to avoid fragmentation of the Snow Mountain Ranch's primitive, forested property is greatly beneficial to the adjoining national forest. The public gains access to these national forest lands by crossing the YMCA's property. From a management perspective, it is far preferable to cross a single property than that of dozens of individual homeowners once the property is subdivided.

I commend the YMCA's desire to preserve the forests, wildlife habitat, and riparian areas on their property through this conservation easement proposal. Their conservation ethic and diligent land stewardship are hallmarks of a long tradition of environmental education and outdoor recreation programs for young and old on the Snow Mountain Ranch

I urge your favorable consideration of this proposal for the Forest Legacy program.

Sincerely,


CRAIG A. MAGWIRE
District Ranger



Caring for the Land and Serving People

Printed on Recycled Paper





United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Kremmling Field Office
P.O. Box 65 - 2103 E. Park Ave
Kremmling, CO 80459
www.co.blm.gov/kr/kr/index.htm

In Reply Refer To:
1789 (CO-126)

JUN 24 2007

Christine Quinlan
The Conservation Fund
1942 Broadway, Suite 323
Boulder, CO 80302

Dear Ms. Quinlan:

I am pleased to submit this letter in support of The Conservation Fund's Forest Legacy grant application submitted by the Snow Mountain Ranch, owned by the YMCA of the Rockies, and located in Grand County, Colorado. The proposed conservation easement on approximately 2,950 acres of the Snow Mountain Ranch is a wonderful opportunity to protect a large, undeveloped tract of private forested property adjacent to public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and lands in the National Forest System. Inclusion of the riparian habitat on Ten Mile Creek and Pole Creek is also highly beneficial.

The YMCA's continued sound management and stewardship of its primitive, forested lands is of utmost importance to the landscape-scale management of private, BLM and Forest Service lands in the area. The proposed conservation easement will avoid fragmentation of the Snow Mountain Ranch, and help reduce the threat of wildfires, protect important wildlife habitat, and maintain the quality of water supplies from the Pole Creek watershed. Preserving the scenic qualities of the Snow Mountain Ranch, which is highly visible from the adjoining BLM land, is also important.

The YMCA has a rich tradition of providing environmental education to youth groups on the Snow Mountain Ranch. The proposed conservation easement project helps ensure that these programs are available in this unique natural setting for generations to come.

Sincerely,

David Stout
Field Manager

July 31, 2007

Mr. Joseph A. Duda
Colorado Forest Legacy Program
Colorado State Forest Service
5060 Campus Delivery
Fort Collins, CO 80523-5060

Dear Joe:

Please accept this endorsement of the application for Forest Legacy funding for the Snow Mountain Ranch in Grand County, Colorado, owned by the YMCA of the Rockies. I am familiar with this property, and was pleased to learn of the landowner's interest in a conservation easement on approximately 2,950 acres comprised of their back-country and the Ten Mile Creek and Pole Creek corridors. The majority of the proposed conservation easement area is forested land, making it a good fit for the Forest Legacy program.

Throughout its ownership, the YMCA of the Rockies has actively managed the forests on the Snow Mountain Ranch, working cooperatively with the Colorado State Forest Service and others. Their sound forest management practices have been critical to maintaining the health of the Pole Creek watershed, mitigating against the threat of wildfires, and thinking ahead to the next generation of healthy forest on the property.

Forests throughout Grand County have been hard hit by an unprecedented epidemic of the Mountain Pine Beetle. The YMCA has done as much or more than any other private landowner to respond to this challenge. They have removed hundreds of beetle-killed trees to protect water sources and recreational trails, and have planted over 900,000 seedlings to regenerate the forest with a greater diversity of species. When a wildfire broke out on the Snow Mountain Ranch in June, the blaze was quickly contained, due in large part to their attention to creating defensible space around guest service facilities.

The opportunity to eliminate subdivision and development on 2,950 acres of the Snow Mountain Ranch is also greatly beneficial to the many species of wildlife, birds and fish that use the property and its creek corridors. I applaud the YMCA's commitment to maintaining the health of the forests and natural resources on their property, and urge your strong consideration of their application.

Sincerely yours,


Ron Cousineau
District Forester

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Colorado State University
1060 Campus Delivery
Fort Collins, Colorado 80521-3060
(970) 491-6300
FAX: (970) 491-7716

Board of Directors
Great Outdoors Colorado Trust Fund
1600 Broadway, Suite 1650
Denver, CO 80202

March 10, 2008

Dear GOCO Board Members:

Please accept this letter of support for The Conservation Fund's application to Great Outdoors Colorado for funding to establish a conservation easement on Snow Mountain Ranch in Grand County, Colorado. My agency is familiar with this property, which is owned by the YMCA of the Rockies, and we were pleased to learn of their interest in a conservation easement on approximately 2,950 acres of forested back country, as well as the Pole Creek corridor and its tributary.

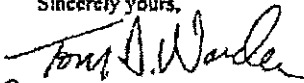
In October 2007, the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) designated Snow Mountain Ranch as the highest priority in Colorado for funding from the Forest Legacy Program in fiscal year 2009. The USDA Forest Service Forest Legacy Program provides funds to purchase permanent conservation easements on private forestlands to prevent those lands from being converted to non-forest uses. The Forest Legacy Program gives priority to properties such as Snow Mountain Ranch because they contain important forest, scenic, recreation, and water resources, as well as fish and wildlife habitat and other ecological values that support continued traditional forest uses.

Throughout its ownership, the YMCA of the Rockies has actively managed forests on Snow Mountain Ranch, working cooperatively with the CSFS and others. Their sound forest management has been critical to maintaining the health of the Pole Creek watershed, mitigating wildfire threats, and thinking ahead to the next generation of healthy forests. Prohibiting development will allow these favorable forest management practices to continue on the property.

Forests throughout Grand County have been devastated by an unprecedented epidemic of the mountain pine beetle. The YMCA has done much to respond to this challenge; they have removed beetle-killed trees to protect water sources and recreational trails, planted more than 700 seedlings to regenerate the forest with a greater diversity of species, and hosted federal, state and local foresters to demonstrate mitigation practices.

I applaud the commitment that the YMCA of the Rockies has demonstrated in maintaining the health of the forests and natural resources on Snow Mountain Ranch through the proposed conservation easement, and I urge your strong consideration of their application. If awarded, GOCO funds will help leverage substantial federal funds for the Snow Mountain Ranch project through the Forest Legacy Program.

Sincerely yours,


for Jeff J. Jahnke
State Forester and Director

cc: Christine Quinlan, The Conservation Fund

STATE OF COLORADO

SEN RITTER, Jr., Governor
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE
AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Mark B. Korish, Acting Director
8000 Broadway
Denver, Colorado 80216
Telephone: (303) 297-1192
wildlife.state.co.us



*For Wildlife
For People*

Hot Sulphur Springs Area Office
P.O. Box 218
740 County Road 362
Hot Sulphur Springs, CO 80451
Telephone: (970) 725-6200
Fax: (970) 725-6217

August 16, 2007

Mr. Joseph A. Duda
Colorado Forestry Legacy Program
Colorado State Forest Service
5060 Campus Delivery
Fort Collins, CO 80523-3060

Dear Mr. Duda:

The Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) appreciates the opportunity to provide input on The Conservation Fund's application for Forest Legacy funds to acquire a conservation easement on approximately 2,950 acres of the Snow Mountain Ranch in Grand County, Colorado owned by YMCA of the Rockies. Wildlife habitats will be protected within this forested area and the adjacent Ten Mile Creek and Pole Creek drainages on this private property.

This area of Snow Mountain Ranch is bordered on both the west and the south by USFS property. An increasing amount of private property within this valley is exposed to increasing habitat fragmentation and permanent loss. A variety of wildlife species occur within the area. These include black bear, moose, elk, mule deer, mountain lion, pine marten, boreal toad, neotropical bird species, raptor species, and a variety of other small mammals, birds and aquatic species. Many of these species utilize the area seasonally. The large area of undeveloped property associated with the adjacent USFS property will benefit movement, utilization, and distribution of these species during the seasons in which they occur.

Permanent loss of wildlife habitat and fragmentation is one of the most severe impacts that affect wildlife within this area. The CDOW applauds the YMCA in pursuing the protection of wildlife habitat, movement corridors, and riparian areas with this application.

Sincerely,

Lyle H. Sidener
Area Wildlife Manager

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, Harris D. Sherman, Executive Director
WILDLIFE COMMISSION, Tom Burke, Chair • Claire O'Neal, Vice Chair • Robert Bray, Secretary



July 19, 2007

Mr. Joseph A. Duda
Colorado Forest Legacy Program
Colorado State Forest Service
5060 Campus Delivery
Fort Collins, CO 80523-5060

Re: Snow Mountain Ranch, Grand County, Colorado

Dear Mr. Duda:

I am writing on behalf of the Town of Fraser Board of Trustees regarding the proposed Conservation Easements at Snow Mountain Ranch.

The Town Board supports opens space protection in Grand County and applauds the Snow Mountain Ranch initiatives to protect open space.

Feel free to contact me should you need any additional information.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey L. Durbin
Town Manager

cc: Town Board

Town of Fraser
PO Box 370, Fraser, CO 80442 office 970-726-3491 fax 970-726-5518
www.frasercolorado.com



March 12, 2008

Board of Directors
Great Outdoors Colorado Trust Fund
1600 Broadway, Suite 1650
Denver, CO 80202

Re: Snow Mountain Ranch, Grand County, Colorado

Dear Members of the Board:

I am writing to express our support of the proposed "Forest Legacy" conservation easement on approximately 2,950 acres of the Snow Mountain Ranch, owned by the YMCA of the Rockies, and located west of Highway 40 just 7 miles north of the Town of Fraser.

The YMCA of the Rockies has actively managed their forested lands for many years, working closely with the Colorado State Forest Service and the United States Forest Service. The YMCA's attention to forest management had been critical to maintaining the health of the Pole Creek watershed, and mitigating the threat of wildfires.

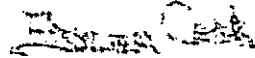
The area surrounding Snow Mountain Ranch is experiencing significant development. Many of the traditional ranches have been sold for subdivision into 35-acre or smaller tracts. Because of this active market for development, the opportunity to conserve the undeveloped and environmentally important forested lands on the Snow Mountain Ranch should not be passed by.

Snow Mountain Ranch is a unique place serving families and groups year-round. Not only does Snow Mountain Ranch contribute to the local economy, its programs connect and reconnect children and their parents with the wonders and inspirations of the natural world. The public access to the property under conservation easement would be significant.

Town of Fraser
PO Box 370, Fraser, CO 80442 Office 970-726-5291 Fax 970-726-5515
www.frasercolorado.com

We applaud the efforts of the YMCA to preserve open space in Grand County and offer our support of the project. We would encourage the Great Outdoors Colorado Trust Fund Board of Directors to favorably consider this project.

Sincerely:



Fran Cook, Mayor
Town of Fraser

Cc: Mark Holdt
YMCA of the Rockies
2515 Tunnel Road
Estes Park, CO 80511

Town of Fraser
PO Box 372, Fraser, CO 80442 office 970.726.5204 fax 970.726.5518
www.townoffraser.com



TOWN OF GRANBY

Zoro & Jaaper Streets

Granby, Colorado 80446-0440

Phone (970)887-2501

FAX (970)887-9347

P.O. Box 440

June 22, 2007

Mr Tom Macy, Western Regional Director
The Conservation Fund
1942 Broadway, Suite 523
Boulder, CO 80302

Dear Director Macy,

This letter is written in support of the efforts by the Snow Mountain Ranch/YMCA of the Rockies to incorporate a significant portion of their lands in Grand County, near the Town of Granby, into a conservation easement.

The YMCA of the Rockies is a valued and important member of our community, providing programs, year-around trails access to beautiful mountain environments, and frequently hosting public events that benefit local organizations and visitors alike. I'm sure you're aware of the problems with the mountain pine beetle infestation, and it's important to point out that the YMCA, both prior to the infestations and during this epidemic has taken an aggressive and responsible stance toward forest management. I'm quite sure that Snow Mountain Ranch will be excellent stewards of the proposed conservation easement.

With the ever increasing pressures of development in eastern Grand County, the proposed conservation easement will protect forested uplands and high value wetlands. I would anticipate that the benefits to wildlife, both in terms of habitat protection and preservation of migration corridors, will be significant.

The Town of Granby is very happy to support this effort by the YMCA of the Rockies. If we can be of any further assistance in this effort, please let us know.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees,

Sincerely,

Edward "Ted" Wang
Mayor

June 8, 2007

Mr. Thomas T. Macy
Western Regional Director
The Conservation Fund
1842 Broadway, Suite 323
Boulder, CO 80302

Dear Mr. Macy:

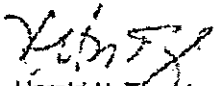
We are writing you in support of the YMCA of the Rockies' project at Snow Mountain Ranch to place as much as 3,000 acres of their property under a conservation easement. We understand that you will be working with the Colorado State Forest Service, the United States Forest Service, the National Forest Legacy Program, and Great Outdoors Colorado, as well as involving our local land trust, the Middle Park Land Trust, on this project.

The YMCA of the Rockies is fortunate to have pristine property with an abundance of natural resources, including forest, wildlife habitat and wetlands. Having a large population of this property (2,750-3,000 acres) protected through a conservation easement would benefit the citizens of Grand County. This easement would restrict development on the property, much of which borders the National Forest, while allowing the continued recreational and educational use of the land.

We support this project and wish you much success in bringing it to reality.

Sincerely,

TOWN OF WINTER PARK


Harold N. Tevrbrough
Mayor

cc: Julie Watkins, YMCA Snow Mountain Ranch

Town of Winter Park

post box 3027

winter park, colorado 80182

phone: 970 726-4881

fax: 970 726-4881

web: winterpark.gov



MIDDLE PARK LAND TRUST
100 Box 7018, 52 N. First St., Grand, Colorado 80441
(970) 887-1177, Fax (970) 887-1178
E-mail: info@middleparklandtrust.org
Website: middleparklandtrust.org

April 13, 2007

Mr. Thomas T. Macy
Western Regional Director
The Conservation Fund
1942 Broadway, Suite 323
Boulder, CO 80302

Dear Mr. Macy,


The purpose of this letter is to express the support of the Middle Park Land Trust for the YMCA of the Rockies to place a substantial portion of their Snow Mountain Ranch property under conservation easement with The Conservation Fund. The mission of the Middle Park Land Trust is to preserve Grand County's scenery, agriculture, water, wildlife, and biodiversity for today and the future, and the completion of this project would support many of these core values.

The YMCA's Snow Mountain Ranch property possesses scenery, water, wildlife and biodiversity values that are important to the character and ecological health of Grand County. Because this property borders large tracts of National Forest as well as areas of private property and US Highway 40 frontage, it is highly visible to citizens and visitors of Grand County. In addition, Snow Mountain Ranch provides habitat for a range of wildlife species and other forms of biodiversity. Its size and location next to public open space provide continuity of habitat for these species. Another key ecological feature that exists on the Snow Mountain property is the Pole Creek Valley Wetlands.

Therefore, the Middle Park Land Trust recommends that The Conservation Fund works to preserve significant portions of the Snow Mountain Ranch property because it is such an ecologically and aesthetically valuable place. A conservation easement would ensure that the land continues to be used in a sustainable manner, and would safeguard views for National Forest users, adjacent property owners, passers-by on the highway corridor, as well as members of the YMCA who are visiting the property itself. Undisturbed views are important to the unique character of Grand County, and this project would help ensure that this legacy stays alive. The Middle Park Land Trust also recognizes the ecological importance of wetlands and large tracts of open space to the overall health of our local ecosystem, and we see the preservation of a portion of the Pole Creek watershed and other parts of Snow Mountain Ranch as an important step in preserving this health.

We wish you success in the completion of this worthy project.

Sincerely,


Billy Sauerlin
Executive Director

cc: Mark Holdt, YMCA of the Rockies