



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Colorado State Office
2850 Youngfield Street
Lakewood, Colorado 80215-7210

NOV 26 2019

In Reply Refer To:
2620 (CO-923)

Dear Interested Parties:

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate a proposed transfer of approximately 17,700 acres of federal surface/federal mineral estate, and an additional 6,000 acres of federal mineral estate only, to the State of Colorado. The BLM is opening a 21-day public scoping period, beginning December 2, 2019.

You can view maps of the parcels and legal descriptions on the project website at <https://go.usa.gov/xp8yU>.

The Colorado State Board of Land Commissioners has filed a petition for classification and application to obtain public lands and mineral estate in lieu of lands to which the State was entitled but did not receive under its Statehood Act of 1875. The State did not receive title because the lands had previously been included in an Indian Reservation, Forest Reserve, National Forest, or other encumbrance. The BLM and the State Board of Land Commissioners would like to satisfy the land debt owed to the state of Colorado.

The BLM will conduct the analysis to determine whether to approve or deny transfer of land, and if approved, which parcels to transfer. The EA will address the purpose and need for the proposed action, issues relating to the transfer of public lands and mineral estate, and potential impacts resulting from the alternatives considered, including the no action alternative.

The BLM identified the following preliminary issues through internal scoping. Identified issues may change as a result of public scoping.

1. Will rights-of-way and County roads continue to be recognized if land is transferred to the State, and what would the impacts be to rights-of way, including those that are converted, and not converted, to a perpetual right-of-way?
2. What would the effect be on current authorized uses if the selected lands were conveyed?
3. What would the effect on livestock grazing operations and existing grazing permits be if the selected lands were conveyed?
4. What would the impacts be to cultural and historic properties by removing federal protections if the selected lands were conveyed?

5. What would the impacts be to special status species populations and habitats, including BLM sensitive species and Federal threatened or endangered species, if the selected lands were conveyed?
6. Considering future uses of the land, what would the impacts be to wildlife populations and habitats if the selected lands were conveyed?
7. What impact would there be to public access, hunting, and recreational traditions and benefits if the selected lands were conveyed?
8. What would the effect on Counties be as a result of a potential reduction in Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) if the selected lands were conveyed?
9. What would the effect be on the socioeconomics of the area if the selected lands were conveyed?

Public involvement - Let BLM know if you have concerns or questions about the proposed action. The BLM will consider information received to help develop the EA. The BLM will accept comments on the proposal from December 2, 2019 through **December 23, 2019**. The BLM will only accept comments through U.S. mail or online through the project website.

Mail: BLM Colorado State Office
Attn: Bruce Krickbaum
2850 Youngfield Street
Lakewood, CO 80215

Online: <https://go.usa.gov/xp8yU>

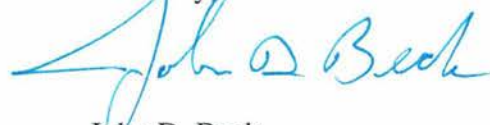
Schedule - The proposed schedule for the project is:

EA available for public comment
Final EA

Spring 2020
Late Spring/Early Summer 2020

For more information - Please visit the project website to learn more about the project. If you have questions about the proposed transfer of land to the State or the environmental review, please contact Jennifer Whyte, Branch of Lands and Realty, at 303-239-3708, or jwhyte@blm.gov.

Sincerely,



John D. Beck
Chief, Branch of Lands and Realty