

DEAR PUBLISHER,

On April 15, 2010, Congressman John Salazar submitted a bill titled "Central Rockies Land Exchange and National Park System Enhancement Act of 2010," H.R.5059, for consideration by the U.S. House on Representatives.

On June 24, 2010, Senators Michael Bennet and Mark Udall submitted the same bill for consideration by the U.S. Senate.

If it becomes law, the bill will transfer 1,846 acres of B.L.M. and Forest Service land located east of the Paonia Reservoir and running toward the Ragged Mountains into private hands – those of the Bear Ranch, LLC. In return, the federal government will get 911 acres of privately owned land within the Curecanti National Monument and 80 acres of privately owned land within Dinosaur National Monument in Utah.

There is nothing in this bill for Delta County even though the land to be traded away is used mostly by Delta County residents and lies in our watershed.

Moreover, this bill has been drafted without public input. Nothing about this bill had appeared in any Gunnison County or Delta County newspaper.

A bill with the potential to cut off one of the access routes into the Ragged Mountains and its streams and lakes should have started out with public meetings, news articles, and the kind of back-and-forth that surrounded the Dominguez Wilderness area and even Paonia's local Mount Jumbo. Instead, Salazar, Bennet and Udall submitted a bill without finding out what we thought.

It is especially wrong when you read the leaked comments from unnamed BLM staffers. Among other things, these staffers say that the bill threatens several utility and road rights-of-way, such as those held by DMEA and TDS and local landowners.

More seriously, the BLM staffers wrote that the exchange would transfer into private hands valuable federal metallurgical coal and natural gas deposits. These resources might then become off limits to mining and drilling, or perhaps they would then become immensely valuable private holdings. The confusion arises because the bill requires the Bear Ranch to place a conservation easement on the newly acquired land, but it is not clear from the BLM's critique how air-tight that easement might be. In any case, this transfer out of the public domain of energy resources potentially affects the economic future of our area and should not be decided without widespread public discussion.

This bill is an out-of-sight rearrangement of our local federal lands. It appears from the bill and from the Gunnison County Commissioners' on-line agendas and minutes that Gunnison County has weighed in on the bill and gotten itself some goodies. But these are not Gunnison County's lands. These are federal lands that belong to all of us and are mostly used by and dependent on by those of us who live in Delta County.

I ask that Congressman Salazar and Senators Udall and Bennet withdraw their bill and start the public process they should have begun with.

Those wishing to read the bill or the BLM comments can contact me at edmarston@paonia.com and I will send you copies. Or, HR 5059 can be found on-line.

Sincerely,
Ed Marston
Paonia, Colorado

WRITING CONTEST WITH CASH PRIZES

If you are an aspiring writer and would like to try writing a novel, you may want to enter the writing contest sponsored by Blue Moon Books of Crested Butte and the Crested Butte Weekly newspaper. But here's the twist, your novel has to be six words or less in length, and it must make story-sense. A \$25.00 cash prize will be awarded to the adult winner and \$25.00 to the young person winner (12 years old or younger.) A short title is allowed, and it does not count in the word total. Here are a few examples, some appeared in a recent issue of AARP, The Magazine, and some were written by C.B. locals.

"Cheating Death" by Helen Greggans: House on fire, pool below, jumped.

"Cheating Death" by Linda Chock: Coin swallowed. Mom frozen. Grandma whacks.

"Big Mistake" by John Napier: High swan dive. Oops! Pool drained.

So there you have it. Want to play? Obviously, you don't have to be a pro, just have fun with the genre. Submit all entries to johnnapier55@gmail.com. All entries must be received no later than September 15th, and decisions by the judges will be final.

TOUCHING PEACE SANGHA meets on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Wednesdays of each month. The next meeting will be at 6:30 pm, Wednesday, July 28. For more information, call 596-2696 or email belindaange-label@gmail.com. (7/28).

DO YOU KNOW WHAT A MELODRAMA IS?

Something very funny is coming
Do you know what a melodrama is?

Well, there is always a villain
And in this show his name is Sly
In fact:

Once was a villain
Sly Scavenger by name
Could lie, cheat, and steal to him
all the same

He spoke with great charm
His intention all harm
And sought to kill Sweetflower
for the mine to lay claim.

Join the Gunnison Arts Center
beginning July 29th for the rest
of the story

(7/28)

ONLINE MEDICAL TRANSCRIPTION TRAINING Western State College of Colorado Extended Studies is hosting an information session on Thursday, July 29 at 6:30 p.m. to provide the community with information on training Extended Studies offers in conjunction with Career Step, a leading online healthcare education company, for careers in the growing healthcare industry. To register to attend visit <http://careerstep.com/ap/western> (7/28).

DEAN DILLON, songwriter, for **George Strait, Toby Keith, Kenny Chesney and many others**, in concert, Friday, July 30 in Lake City at the **Sportsman's Backyard Amphitheatre**. Tickets include a bbq dinner. Call **970-944-2525** for details and tickets. (7/28/37).

BLOW THE ALPHORN! FREE KIDS CONCERT! This Saturday at 11am on Mt. Crested Butte! Arkady Shilkloper returns to the mountain to perform his world-famous Alphorn! Interactive kids events begin at 10AM! Call 340-0619 or visit crestedbuttemusicfestival.com for more information! (7/28).

PEARL PASS ROAD will be closed to through traffic the weekend of July 31 and August 1 for a bridge replacement. The bridge is being replaced at the intersection of Pearl Pass and Montezuma Basin Roads. Hikers may experience some delays at the bridge. (7/28).

THIS WEEK AT THE CRESTED BUTTE MUSIC FESTIVAL features performances including CHAMBER MUSIC by MOZART and BRAHMS; LA BOHEME on August 3rd and 5th; members of the Opera Young Artist on July 29th and 30th; ALPHORN performances by Arkady Shilkloper on the 29th, 31st and 1st; an evening performance featuring the FESTIVAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA on the 1st and more! Visit crestedbuttemusicfestival.com or call 349-619 for more information! (7/28).

9-1-1 SOLO ES PARA EMERGENCIAS. Llame 641-8000 para situaciones que no requieren emergencia. (7/28).

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Zurich • Encompass Insurance

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN SECULAR CONCERT SERIES will present a vocal recital by Marie Del Vecchio and her daughter Renee, accompanied by Nancy Church on piano. Saturday, July 31st, 7:30pm. Reception to follow. 307 W Virginia Ave. (7/28).

QUARTZ CREEK IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION bake sale fund raiser. Saturday, July 31, 9-1 at the Ohio City school house. (8/4).

HELP SUPPORT THE PITKIN HISTORICAL AND COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION by participating in the drawings at Pitkin Day, July 31st. Donated items will be on display at the Pitkin School House/Museum in Pitkin, CO, and one-dollar tickets (6 for \$5.00, or 12 for \$10.00.) may be purchased before and during Pitkin Day. Tickets are available at the School House/Museum or Silver Plume. (7/28).

BABY BOOK CLUB STORY TIME will have its last gathering on Monday, August 2nd. Please come & receive your child's attendance certificate & other goodies. Thank you for being such great parents and bringing your child to the library. The other storytimes on Tuesdays & Wednesdays will continue as scheduled. (7/28).

THE CRESTED BUTTE MOUNTAIN HERITAGE MUSEUM will host a book signing Tuesday August 3rd from 4:30pm-6:30pm by local author Dr. Duane Vandenbusche. The book is titled "Around Monarch Pass". The book contains many images that are previously unpublished. "Around Monarch Pass" is available for purchase at the Museum store. Light refreshments will be served. For questions, call 349-1880. (7/28).

DESPENSA DE ALIMENTOS: habrá distribución de alimentos en el sitio de los rodeos, 275 Spruce st, el miércoles 4 de agosto a las 9 de la mañana. (7/28).

BLM UNCOMPAGHGRE RELEASES FINAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVER ELIGIBILITY REPORT AND BEGINS COMMENT PERIOD

The Bureau of Land Management Uncompahgre Field Office (UFO) announces the release of the Final Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Report for the BLM Uncompahgre Planning Area, as well as the opportunity to participate in the determination of suitability phase.

The determination of suitability phase focuses on jurisdictional and manageability issues affecting eligible waterways. Criteria developed by the BLM and the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council will be used to evaluate the suitability of eligible river segments.

As a component of the Uncompahgre Resource Management Plan (RMP) revision, the UFO is required to evaluate rivers and streams within its jurisdiction for potential inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

"Public input is an essential component of our planning process, which is why it is important that they weigh in with their thoughts and concerns related to the determination of suitability within the Uncompahgre planning area," said Barbara Sharrow, Field Manager for the UFO.

All rivers and streams with a perennial or intermittent flow within the Uncompahgre planning area and the portion of the newly designated Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area (NCA), within the UFO boundary, were inventoried. The BLM identified 174 river segments for study, 34 of which possess the free-flowing character and outstandingly remarkable values required for eligibility.

Five Dominguez-Escalante NCA segments evaluated by the Grand Junction Field Office, as part of their planning effort, are also available for input as to determination of suitability. Comments pertaining to suitability that were submitted during the public scoping period for eligibility will be carried forward and integrated into the suitability evaluation.

The Wild and Scenic River eligibility report, segment suitability comment forms, instructions, and information are available at our office in Montrose and online at: www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/ufo/wild_and_scenic_river.html.

Submit comment forms by August 16, 2010 via email to: uformp@blm.gov, or mail to: BLM UFO, Attention: RMP Revision, 2465 South Townsend Ave., Montrose, CO 81401.

The Southwest District BLM Resource Advisory Subcommittee will facilitate a public stakeholder group to assist the BLM in determining which segments are suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System and in developing the range of suitability alternatives for the San Miguel and Dolores river basins. In addition, the Colorado River Water Conservation District will convene a broad-based stakeholders' group to offer recommendations regarding river segments for the Gunnison River Basin.

Please contact the BLM UFO at (970) 240-5300 for more information.

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