AGENDA ITEM or FINAL CONTRACT REVIEW SUBMITTAL FORM

Agenda Item: Letter of Support; Great Outdoors Colorado; Trampe

Action Requested: Motion

Parties to the Agreement:

Term Begins: **Term Ends:** **Grant Contract #:**

Summary:

Please see the attached.

Fiscal Impact: None

Submitted by: Katherine Haase **Submitter's Email Address:** khaase@gunnisoncounty.org

Finance Review: ○ Required ◉ Not Required

Comments:

Reviewed by: Discharge Date:

County Attorney Review: ○ Required ◉ Not Required

Comments:

Reveiwed by: Discharge Date: Certificate of Insurance Required

Yes ○ No ○

County Manager Review:

Comments:

Reveiwed by: GUNCOUNTY1\mbirnie Discharge Date: 4/15/2016

◉ Consent Agenda ○ Regular Agenda ○ Worksession Time Allotted:

Agenda Date: 4/19/2016

Revised April 2015

GOCO Protect Initiative
Concept Paper for Trampe Ranch
February 12, 2016

Organization:	Trust for Public Land
Contact person:	Justin Spring
Contact person's phone:	(303) 867-2331 office, (303) 868-0966 mobile
Contact person's e-mail:	justin.spring@tpl.org
Project title:	Trampe Ranch Conservation Easement
County/Counties:	Gunnison
Acreage:	4,848
Anticipated timing of transaction(s), including purchase contract(s) and closing:	Option Agreement signed. Due diligence Feb. 2016 onward. Closing December 2016 and January 2017.
Estimated GOCO request amount: *Please note requests for Protect grants must be a minimum of $1 million.*	$10,000,000
Anticipated source(s) of matching funds, amount(s), and respective timing: *Please note these projects require a 25% minimum match, with a minimum of 12.5% in cash.*	➢ NRCS ALE (GSS) - 3,800,000 (2016) ➢ Town of Crested Butte - 1,000,000 (2016) ➢ Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory - 500,000 (2016) ➢ National Fish and Wildlife Foundation - 500,000 (2016) ➢ Gunnison County Land Preservation Board - 200,000 (split equally 2016/2017) ➢ 1% for Open Space - $200,000 (split equally 2016/2017) ➢ Gates Family Foundation - 200,000 ➢ Private Donors - 1,200,000 *(Match = 7,600,000, or 43% of total cost)*
Estimated total project cost:	$17,600,000 (GOCO = 57%)
Estimated land donation value, if any:	$5,900,000
Is the conservation easement holder certified by the State of Colorado?	Yes (The Nature Conservancy)
Is the conservation easement holder accredited by the Land Trust Alliance?	Yes
Has the conservation easement holder applied for Terrafirma insurance coverage? If yes, were you accepted? If you have not applied or you were not accepted, describe your approach to guarding your organization from legal challenges related to your conservation easements.	Yes applied; yes accepted
Please list at least five dates during the respective site visit period listed on the previous page when GOCO may conduct a site visit:	Anytime during April 13-29. It is calving season on the Trampe Ranch, so visits will be interesting.

Project Values and Benefits (conservation and natural values; significance to state, region, and community; catalyst for additional conservation)

The Trampe Ranch Conservation Project will protect productive agricultural lands, one mile of the Gunnison River, three miles of the East River, and significant natural habitat resources for the Gunnison Sage-grouse and other terrestrial and aquatic animals. Elk, mule deer, black bears, mountain lions, many smaller mammals, numerous migratory and resident birds, and 13 raptor species share the ranch. Trampe Ranch comprises nearly 6,000 acres of some of the most outstanding scenery in Colorado, extending from south from Gothic to Crested Butte Mountain, past Jack's Cabin and along the East River to the Home Ranch, located at the heart of the agricultural lands north of Gunnison.

Trampe Ranch is one of the largest cow/calf and yearling operations in the region, accounting for about 20 percent of Gunnison County's annual agricultural productivity. Bill Trampe is highly respected locally and throughout Colorado. He has been committed to ranchland conservation for more than 20 years. His goal is to use conservation easements to provide a permanent natural resource base for agriculture on a large enough scale that the business of producing food will continue to be sustainable forever, alongside the added benefits of providing wildlife habitat and scenic beauty. Water is so important to ranching that Trampe has served in many capacities for local, state, and West-wide water policy efforts. He received the 2015 Wayne N. Aspinall "Water Leader of the Year Award" from the Colorado Water Congress for his service, commitment and leadership.

Conservation of Trampe Ranch will encourage other owners of similar-sized ranches. Over the past 20 years more than 34% of the agricultural lands in Gunnison County has been placed in conservation easements, but larger operations have been skeptical that conservation is a good business decision. Bill Trampe's reputation for producing at the highest possible levels while sustaining the natural resources that provide the foundation of agriculture will encourage other landowners to follow suit.

Project Urgency and Opportunity (need to protect now rather than later; threats of development; impacts to surrounding land)

Recent health issues give urgency to Trampe's desire to place the ranch into conservation. Without permanent protection, a generational change would likely result in loss of the ranch to development. Conservation will have a significant positive impact on preserving the heritage and viability of agriculture and related economic benefits of tourism in Gunnison County. Development of Trampe Ranch would change the entire character of the valley, and the viability of adjacent ranches would be compromised. The ranch provides an extensive buffer between the resort areas near Crested Butte and the recreational and wilderness amenities provided by adjacent public lands.

Leveraging of Funds (GOCO request; matching funds; local funding source; landowner donation)

Total project value:			23,500,000
Project cash:			
GOCO Protect Initiative	10,000,000		
NRCS ALE (GSS)	3,800,000		
Town of Crested Butte	1,000,000		
Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory	500,000		
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	500,000		
Gunnison County Land Preservation Board	200,000		
1% for Open Space	200,000		
Gates Family Foundation	200,000		
Private Donors	1,200,000		
Total project cash (75% of project value):		17,600,000	
Landowner Donation (25% of project value):		5,800,000	

Meeting GOCO's Strategic Plan (landscape-scale conservation; rivers and riparian corridors; urban parcels; public access)

Preservation of Trampe Ranch accomplishes landscape-scale conservation over more than 30 miles of the East River and Gunnison River Valleys. One mile of the Gunnison River and nearly three miles of the East River are included in the project. The Trampe project, located in the Gunnison Basin priority landscape, is a top priority for the Keep it Colorado partnership. The ranch leases its property for controlled public access for hunting, fishing, and ecological research. Education programs take place annually through agricultural youth events and ranch tours for various groups.

Partnership and Non-monetary Support (programs and partnerships; in-kind donations; community support)

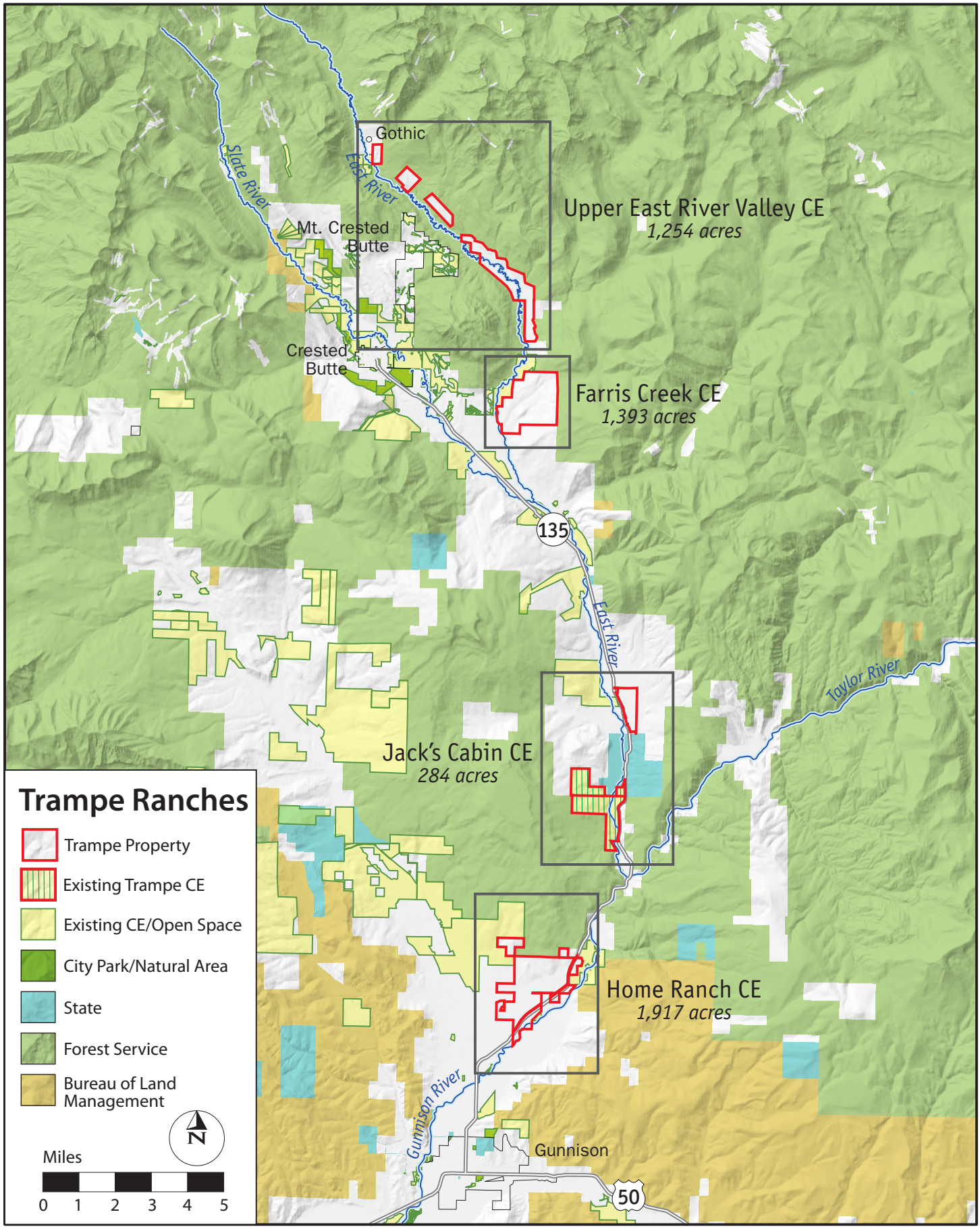
The Trampe Ranch Conservation Project has substantial support locally, regionally, and across Colorado. Formal partners with TPL include The Nature Conservancy (land trust to hold the conservation easement), the Gunnison Ranchland Conservation Legacy (providing substantial in-kind support via administrative assistance with all aspects of the transaction), and the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory. Local community supporters include the City of Gunnison, Towns of Crested Butte and Mt. Crested Butte, Gunnison County Commissioners, Gunnison County Stockgrowers' Association, Gunnison Valley Cattlewomen, Western State Colorado University, Upper Gunnison Water Conservancy District, hunting and fishing organizations, homeowners' associations, and youth groups. Statewide support comes from the Colorado River District, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Gunnison Sage-grouse Working Group, Habitat Partnership Program, Colorado Cattlemen's Association, and other land trusts.

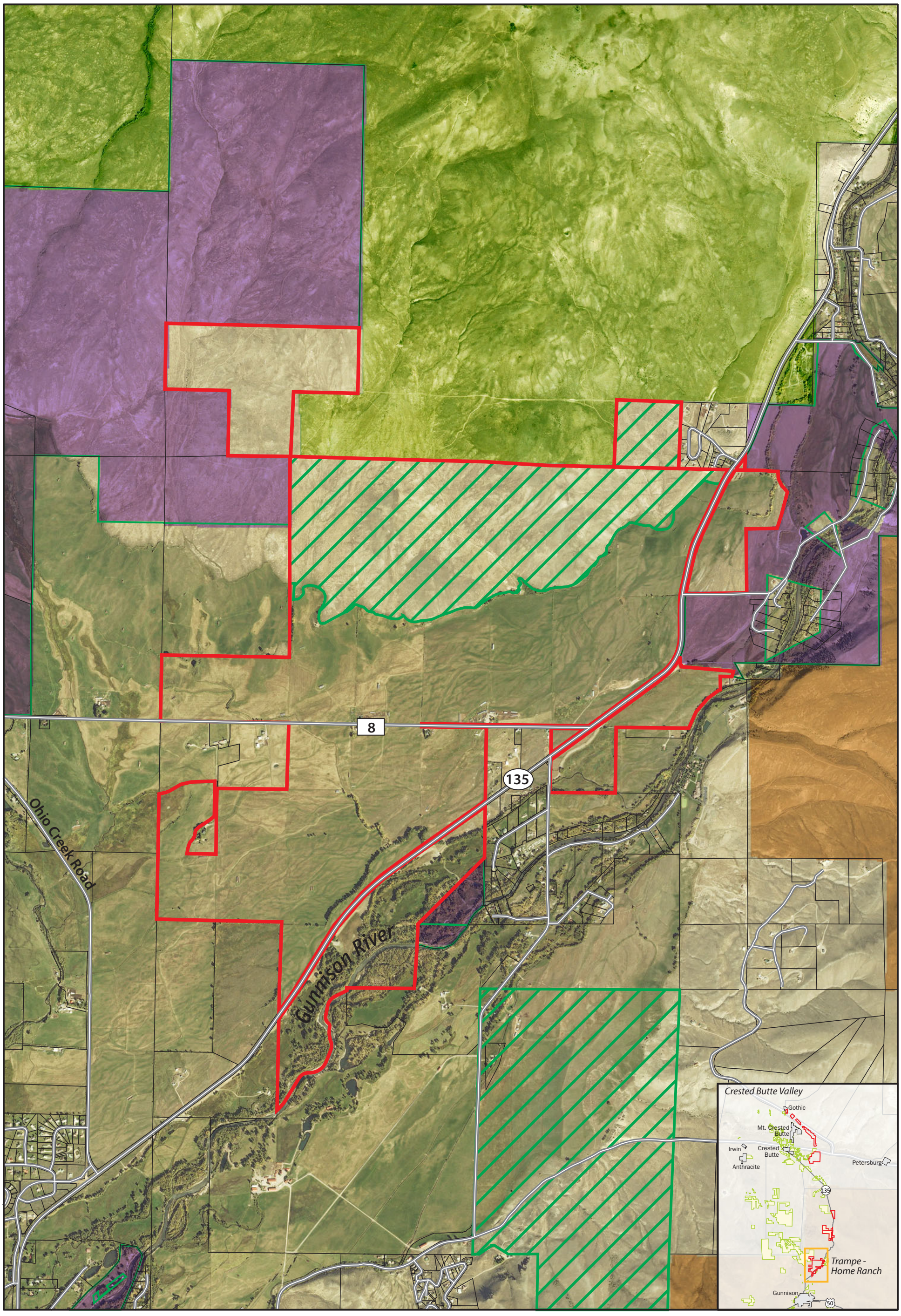
Reserved Rights and Property Uses (current and proposed uses; adjacent and nearby land ownership and uses)

Trampe Ranch is a cow-calf operation based on 5939 acres of owned land, several thousand acres more of leased private land, and hundreds of thousands of acres of federal grazing permits. Adjacent ranches are similar in operation and land base. The current agricultural use will continue after the conservation easement project is completed. Reserved rights are for the existing building areas on the 1917-acre home ranch north of Gunnison to continue to serve as the headquarters of Trampe Ranch. One other parcel (Jack's Cabin) will retain the existing residence for worker housing. Seasonal cow camps will continue on the high country parcels. One 160-acre encumbered parcel may be transferred in the future to a neighboring ranch. Permitted uses include agriculture and related commercial operations, wildlife habitat management, guiding and outfitting for hunting or fishing, research as permitted by the landowner, and educational activities promoting agriculture and natural resources. A 978-acre Colorado Open Lands conservation easement from 2003 and 113 acres adjacent to the Almont Wildlife Triangle that may be used in a future exchange are not included in this project; hence the total of 4848 acres.

Transaction and Due Diligence Requirements (transaction details; encumbrances; access; environmental hazards; mineral rights; water rights)

The transaction is a straightforward ranch conservation easement project that we anticipate will occur through two separate closings. The southern parcels will close as one conservation easement in December 2016 and the northern parcels will close as a second easement in January 2017. Access is by State Highway 135 or by various county roads. Existing encumbrances include access via roads or driveways for neighbors and for public utilities. There are no known environmental hazards. The mineral rights are not intact on some of the property. All water rights owned by Trampe Ranch will be permanently encumbered by the conservation easement.


Gothic
Slate River
East River
Mt. Crested Butte
Crested Butte
Upper East River Valley CE
1,254 acres
Farris Creek CE
1,393 acres
135
East River
Taylor River
Jack's Cabin CE
284 acres
Home Ranch CE
1,917 acres
Gunnison River
Gunnison
50
Trampe Ranches
Trampe Property
Existing Trampe CE
Existing CE/Open Space
City Park/Natural Area
State
Forest Service
Bureau of Land Management
N
Miles
0 1 2 3 4 5



Home Ranch Conservation Easement

Gunnison County Colorado

Trampe Property

Pending CE

Existing CE/Open Space

USFS

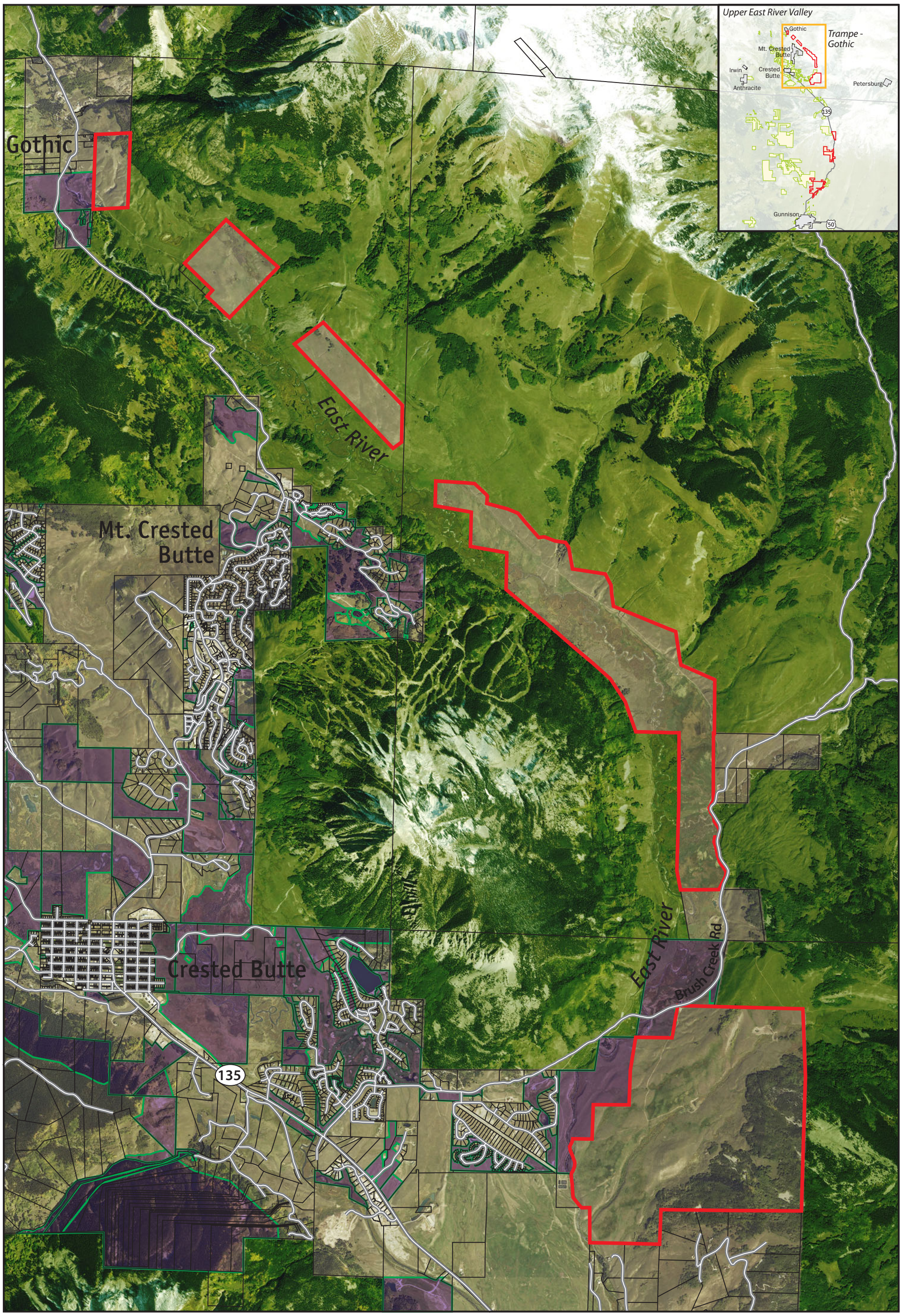
BLM

County Parcel

N

Feet

0 1000 2000



Trampe - Gothic

Gunnison County Colorado

Trampe Property | Existing Easement/Open Space | US Forest Service | County Parcel

N

Feet

0 2000 4000

Photo 1. Looking NE from County Road 8 across the corrals and pastures of the Trampe Home Ranch.

Photo 2. Looking S from the Deer Creek Trail at the meanders of the East River on Trampe Ranch property. The northeastern base of Crested Butte Mountain is at the upper right of the photo.

Photo 3. Looking N from the Brush Creek Road across the Trampe Ranch Upper East River Valley parcels. The eastern base of Crested Butte Mountain is on the left of the photo.

Photo Credits: Photos 1 and 2 by Barb East
Photo 3 by John Fielder

April 19, 2016

Great Outdoors Colorado
303 E. 17th Avenue, Suite 1060
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Trampe Ranch Conservation Easement

Dear GOCO:

Gunnison County is supportive of the Trampe Ranch Conservation Easement grant application being made by The Trust for Public Land to the GOCO Protect Initiative. This project will complete the protection of nearly 6,000 acres of the Trampe Ranch, which extends over 30 miles of the East River Valley, and which is such a key component of the heart of agriculture in our community.

Our County is very encouraging of conservation easements on open lands, agricultural lands and wildlife habitat. This position is articulated in the Gunnison County Land Use Resolution in several sections:

"PROTECT THE HERITAGE OF OUR RURAL CHARACTER. To protect ranching and other existing industries, the beauty of the landscape and rural character of Gunnison County, in order to enhance recreational opportunities for residents and visitors, preserve important archeological and historic sites and viewsheds, and conserve soil, water, and forestry resources. To ensure that no land use change significantly detracts from the economic base, the environmental, historical, recreational, or aesthetic character of the County." (Gunnison County Land Use Resolution §§ 1-103.A.3.)

"PROMOTE CONTNUING VIABILTIY OF AGRICULTURE. To promote innovation in land use changes that contribute to continuing viable agricultural operations and recognize the public benefit of protecting the open space that agricultural operations provide, and to discourage land use changes that jeopardize those activities. To identify land use change on agricultural land, to protect ditches and stock drive routes, to encourage land use change that will retain the agricultural productivity of the land and to discourage land use change that will adversely affect agricultural operation on lands not owned by the applicant." (Gunnison County Land Use Resolution §§ 1-103.C.3.)

"PRESERVE WILDLIFE HABITAT. To protect and preserve lands from land use activities and patterns of development that would cause significant net adverse effects to sensitive wildlife habitat and to discourage land uses that will impair or destroy such habitats, or their utilization by wildlife species, or that would endanger a wildlife species." (Gunnison County Land Use Resolution §§ 1-103.D.3.)

In addition, the Board of County Commissioners has set an annual goal of conserving at least 1,700 acres of private land annually.

Thank you for your support of this valuable project.

Best Regards,

Paula Swenson, Chairperson	Phil Chamberland, Commissioner	Jonathan Houck, Commissioner