



Cross Mountain Canyon

An America's Great Outdoors Project

Little Snake Field Office, Craig, Colorado

America's Great Outdoors Initiative

- President Obama launched the AGO initiative in 2010
- Among other purposes, the initiative provided funds to provide enhanced opportunities for public access to parks and green spaces and improved recreational opportunities

Cross Mountain Ranch Acquisition

- In 2013, the Little Snake Field Office acquired 920 acres along the Yampa River
- Parcel had been in private ownership
- Purchase was made through a partnership with the Western Rivers Conservancy
- The acquisition provided an additional 2.9 miles of public access to the Yampa River
- The parcel adjoins the existing Cross Mountain Wilderness Study Area

Cross Mountain Ranch Acquisition

- Along with the land acquisition, BLM also acquired conditional water rights associated with two irrigation ditches (Morgan Ditch- 7 CFS; Circle Hawk Ditch- 4.5 CFS)
- A modular house was located on the property and has since been removed
- A horse corral is present on the property and is being retained



Special resources

- Parcel provides additional public access for rafting and kayaking in Cross Mountain Canyon.
- Increased access for hunting and fishing.
- Located near existing river put-in managed by Colorado Parks and Wildlife.
- Numerous historical and cultural resources.
- Provides additional protection for federally protected fish species: Colorado pike minnow, humpback chub, bonytail chub, and razorback sucker.

Current activities

- BLM is working with the State of Colorado to retain and perfect the conditional water rights.
- Fencing surrounding the property is in disrepair; BLM is in the process of repairing and replacing all boundary fencing.
- The parcel is infested with Russian knapweed, leafy spurge, curlycup gumweed, and tamarisk. Herbicide treatments began in fall of 2015 and will continue in upcoming years.

Planning needs/future management

- Continue to conduct due diligence on the Morgan Ditch and Circle Hawk conditional water rights and conversion of all but 0.5 CFS to instream rights, leaving the remainder as a surface right to facilitate future upland water development.
- Achieve control of existing weeds.
- Use fencing to create a riparian pasture for neighboring grazing allotments; use grazing as a tool to control weeds and promote desirable species.
- Further develop and enhance public access through primitive parking and trailhead facility and a kiosk.

Questions?