



# United States Department of the Interior



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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In Reply Refer To:  
2200 (CO-923)  
COC-74812

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### Memorandum

To: Assistant Director, Minerals and Realty Management (WO-350)

From: Acting State Director *[Signature]* *[Signature]* Tel Steven Hall

Subject: Request for Review to Complete the Sutey Ranch Land Exchange – COC-74812 <sup>Acting</sup>

The Sutey Ranch Land Exchange, initiated in 2011, is at the decision stage. This exchange involves federal lands administered by the Colorado River Valley Field Office. The exchange is a multiple- parcel, single transaction assembled land exchange, involving the disposal of six parcels of federal lands totaling 1,470.01 acres to acquire two parcels of non-federal lands totaling 433.03 acres. The lands proposed for exchange are located in Pitkin, Garfield, and Eagle counties. The parties included in the exchange are the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Leslie and Abigail Wexner. The purpose of this memorandum is to request your review of the attached land exchange decision package so that it can be forwarded to the Director. Copies of the following documents are attached to assist you in this review:

- Draft Land Exchange Decision Summary
- Draft Decision Record (DR)
- Draft Notice of Decision (NOD)
- Appraisal Summary/Supplemental Report
- Briefing Paper for the Director
- Maps

Also attached for your information are copies of the Washington Office (WO) approval to proceed with the exchange, the published Notice of Exchange Proposal, and the Agreement to Initiate.

The proposed land exchange meets the BLM management objectives to promote more effective natural resource management of the public lands. The non-federal lands lie adjacent to large blocks of public lands and have public access that will provide substantial recreational opportunities. The non-federal parcels contain valuable winter wildlife habitat in an area where open space is rapidly disappearing due to development. The federal lands have limited or no legal public access and are difficult to manage.

Appraisal of the lands originally proposed for exchange indicated that the total value of the non-federal lands was substantially higher than the total value of the federal lands. There are no public lands in the area of interest that are suitable for, or of interest to the Proponents, for addition to

equalize the proposed exchange. Exclusion of lands from either non-federal parcel in the exchange would not provide the recreation and wildlife benefits that the BLM seeks to obtain. To equalize the exchange, the Sutey Ranch parcel was separated into two tracts, with a 321.25-acre tract to remain as the exchange parcel and a 235.38-acre tract to be donated by the Proponents to the United States as stated in the Proponents' July 15, 2013, letter to Steve Bennett, Field Manager, Colorado River Valley Field Office.

When the resource values on the selected federal lands are compared with those on the offered non-federal lands, the resource values and the public objectives that the federal lands would serve if retained in federal ownership are not greater than the resource values and public objectives the non-federal lands could serve if acquired. The loss of limited resource values present on the federal lands is more than offset by the acquisition of the non-federal lands.

We have provided a copy of the land exchange decision package to the Solicitor's Office for review. We will forward any Solicitor's comments or suggested changes to the WO for inclusion in the package.

The environmental assessment, the appraisals, and all supporting studies for the exchange have been completed. The rationale for the Colorado River Valley field manager's determination that the exchange is in the public interest is supported and documented in the draft Decision Record. The draft DR and the draft Notice of Decision were reviewed by the Colorado State Office realty staff. Each appears to conform to the BLM guidance for processing land exchanges.

If you have any questions in regard to any of the documents, please contact Alexa Watson, Realty Specialist, at (303) 239-3796 or John Beck, Chief, Branch of Lands and Realty, at (303) 239-3882.

10 Attachments:

- 1 - Draft Land Exchange Decision Summary (4 pp)
- 2 - Draft Decision Record (14 pp)
- 3 - Draft Notice of Decision (8 pp)
- 4 - Appraisal Summary/Supplemental Report (11 pp)
- 5 - Briefing Paper for the Director (2 pp)
- 6 - Washington Office approval to proceed with the exchange (3 pp)
- 7 - Notice of Exchange Proposal (1 p)
- 8 - Agreement to Initiate (14 pp)
- 9 - Maps (5 pp)
- 10 - Donation offer letter (2 pp)

cc: Steve Bennett, Field Manager,  
Colorado River Valley Field Office