



**ROARING FORK VALLEY HORSE COUNCIL**

P O Box 127

Snowmass, CO 81654

[www.rfvhorsecouncil.org](http://www.rfvhorsecouncil.org)

**THE BLM HISTORIC SUTHEY RANCH PARCEL**

Attention – Sutey/Haines Management Plan  
The Colorado River Valley Field Office -BLM  
Gloria Tibbetts  
2300 River Frontage Road  
Silt, CO 81652

July 30, 2018

Dear Gloria,

The Roaring Fork Valley Horse Council (RFVHC) appreciates that the BLM acquired the Historic Sutey Ranch Parcel. We are thankful to be included in the public conversation to decide the future of the Sutey Ranch. The Horse Council embodies numerous valley residents with many different technical skills including ranching knowledge, and enthusiasm for our public lands.

The RFVHC is the only non-profit, equestrian organization speaking for the interests of the whole equestrian community in the Roaring Fork Valley. Ranchers, horse boarding facilities, horse trainers and instructors, English riders, Western riders, rodeo competitors, polo players, horse shoers (farriers), veterinarians, CMC Vet Technical school, the International Equitarin initiative, feed store owners and customers, equine therapy professionals and the people they help, children and organizations supporting them, such as 4-H,

International Pony Club (RFHPC -local chapter here) gymkhanas, youth rodeo, All Breed Shows and many more – These people, their businesses and organizations are a small part of the fabric of the horse industry in our valley. Missouri Heights is dotted with a multitude of horse properties, generating taxes and supporting the local economy. We are their voice.

We ask that the Sutey Ranch be the one place where we can ride horses without mountain bikes, and without the fear and anxiety caused by fast moving mountain bikes.

Please support keeping mountain bikes on the BLM, Red Hill SRMA area, and out of the Sutey Ranch.

According to the Colorado Horse Council, the horse industry has a 2.6 billion dollar impact on our Colorado economy, producing \$764 million dollars in goods & services. The value of all equine related assets totaled \$7.7 billion in 1998, and the recreational aspect of the horse industry, and trail riding in particular has grown in the last 20 years. The Equine Business Association (EBA) founder Christina Jones calls the Equine Businesses one of the biggest national industries that is hidden in plain sight. Most people outside (& many within) have no idea of the global scale & significance of the equine industry.

According to Alltech's Steve Elliot, the annual economic impact of the equine industry is significant – involving some \$300 billion dollars and 1.6 million full-time jobs.

We are interested in participating in anyway the BLM might find to be useful. We realize there is a Red Hill Council that advises the BLM and organizes volunteers. The Red Hill Council shows a horseback rider icon on their trail map, however at this time they do not have an equestrian member to consult for information about horses on the trails. We have met with Red Hill Council, the BLM, the CPW and many other valley government entities. We are for a balanced management approach on our public lands. We propose a “Friends of the Historic Sutey Ranch”, support group, organized by the RFVHC to assist with implementation and on-going maintenance for the BLM Plan on the Sutey Ranch.



## **SUTEY**

- The Roaring Fork Valley Horse Council (RFVHC) is asking the BLM to preserve the 557 acre, Historic Sutey Ranch Homestead Property to be designated a recreational area with an emphasis on horseback riding and hiking only. Our appeal is that there would be no mountain biking on this parcel.
- We recommend that Sutey Ranch Parcel not be included in the Red Hill SRMA and that there be no mountain biking trails on this land.
- We find mountain bike activity incompatible with the Sutey Property. Our concern with including mountain bikes on the Sutey Ranch Parcel is that they like to go fast; they tend to wander off trails and establish new trails, accidentally or intentionally; and the BLM admittedly does not have enough personnel to regulate and enforce compliance. There is one compliance ranger for over 567,086 acres.

- Most beginner / intermediate horseback riders and their horses may not be experienced enough to deal with fast moving mountain bikes. The Sutey Ranch is perfect for the novice horses and horseback riders.
- Please see attached, the RFMBA - Red Hill existing trails, with plans for two loops they describe as “fast and super fun,” they want to build on the new Sutey Parcel –  
Please see:  
Addendum A – Northside Loop  
Addendum B – Big Top  
Addendum C – Red Hill map showing the Sutey Ranch
- RFMBA has been envisioning (and discussing with BLM staff + Red Hill Council members) two trails open to bikes from the new Sutey trailhead to allow for a loop experience vs. an out-and-back. One trail to connect to Red Hill’s Big Top trail and one trail to connect with Red Hill’s Northside Loop.
- If allowed, these bike trails would enter above the Sutey Ranch from a high elevation. Bikes would be speeding downhill through the wooded areas into the open pastures.
- Below is a description of the type of trails being proposed on the Sutey Ranch, taken from the RFMBA web site:  
“This is where the fun really begins. The sage fields in the middle of this loop are **super fast** and so much fun. Wooded technical spots are thrown into the mix but the **fast sage riding starts again**. Riding in this direction can be tough later in the day as you're riding into the sun in all the high speed sections.”
- Fast moving mountain bikes on the Sutey Ranch will be a devastation for wildlife, hikers, horsemen and horse women. The peace and tranquility of the precious place will be gone.
- The equestrian and hiking communities ask that there be no new trails constructed on the Sutey Ranch Parcel. We feel that the land is perfect for us to ride and hike using on the existing trails. The more untouched and protected the land is from human development of trails, the more we will preserve wildlife habitat, and without mountain bikes, the most vulnerable user groups, hikers and horseback riders with children will have a predictable, peaceful, safe, and enjoyable trail experience.

- The RFMBA has been involved with all trail design and construction. The RFVHC has not been contacted and has been left out of the discussion for any potential parking / trails on the Haines Parcel, Red Hill, and the Sutey Ranch.

## TRAILS



- The Sutey Ranch has been used only by horseback riders and hikers for half a century or more. The Sutey Brothers allowed equestrians and hikers to share their land.
- Introducing mountain bikes on Sutey Ranch at this time would be a change in use, and is unnecessary. Mountain bikers have an abundance of trails to ride in the mid valley area, including the SRMAs on the 9,100 acres of the Crown and the 3,100 acres on Red Hill, which is contiguous to the Sutey Ranch Parcel. The 557 acres of the Sutey Ranch is 4.5% of the combined Red Hill and the Crown SRMAs. If you add in Snowmass - USFS special bike recreation, Pitkin County's Open Space Lands of 20,000 acres, and Sky Mountain Park we believe that the Colorado State Governor's mandate, "Our goal is to make Colorado the best state for biking in the country." We believe that goal has been met in this valley. At this point other

- trail users, like hikers and horseback riders are losing the ability to enjoy the trails, and are being threatened with increased pressure of mountain biking. Please do not add any mountain bike trails on the Sutey Ranch.
- Red Hill, mountain bikes and other users will have an additional, enlarged parking area at Hwy 82, and two new mountain bike trails, one of which is a specialized, downhill flow trail on the new twenty five acre piece of land recently purchased.
- Our valley equestrian children need a place to ride. The Roaring Fork Hounds Pony Club Children (RFHPC) attended the BLM, July 12<sup>th</sup>, Scoping Meeting for the Sutey/Haines Parcels. Established in 1964, the RFHPC is a non-profit local chapter of the United States Pony Club, based in Missouri Heights, Carbondale, CO. The International Pony Club was established over 100 years ago. This highly organized and successful, for children and now adult riding program, offering English and Western disciplines, teaches life lessons using horses. A significant tenant of Pony Club is land stewardship, conservation and management. This translates into respect, appreciation, responsibility and service. Many Pony Club graduates continue the tradition by becoming the leaders sustaining the generational tradition of sustaining this wonderful organization.
- The BLM will benefit by fostering and nurturing children, who ride horseback on the Sutey Ranch and who, if the land is saved for them, will steward these land for generations to come.



Families like to trail ride –  
Heading out together for an enjoyable trail experience.



Heading up in to the old growth Juniper and Pinon Forest through the red sandstone lichen rock.  
(Middle of Sutey Ranch going towards the South East)





Through the Pinon Forest heading to the South West of the Sutey Property.

## PARKING



- The location of the existing parking lot is suitable, but the size needs to be enlarged. An appropriate equestrian parking lot accommodates trucks and trailers as they pull in, swing around in the area, and angle park, facing out.
- 100 feet is the minimum space needed to swing around modern horse trucks and trailers. Most trucks and trailer rigs are 40-60 feet in length. Shared parking works best, when vehicles have designated parking areas separate from the horse trailers. People unfamiliar with horses may not understand that horsemen and horses need extra space by the trailer for tying, saddling and loading.

## WILDLIFE and WATER



The Sutey Parcel is identified as suitable habitat for the milk snake (*Lampropeltis triangulum taylori*) and the Northern Goshawk, sensitive species.

- The RFVHC asks the BLM to place special protection on the wildlife and the water rights assigned to the Sutey Parcel. We recommend strict winter wildlife closures for all human activity. Starting Dec 1<sup>st</sup> through May 15<sup>th</sup> For safety of wildlife, dogs need be kept under control by their owners on leash.

### Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*)



- We ask the BLM to protect and enhance the habitat for large game and sensitive species on the Sutey Ranch. The equestrian community is interested in helping the BLM with wildlife habitat improvements, weed mitigation, irrigation, and in general, conservation of the Sutey Parcel.
- The Sutey Ranch includes ditch water rights for approximately 2.25 cubic feet per second, decreed to the Park Ditch and Reservoir Company, and 50 acre-feet of water storage rights. In addition, there are three stock ponds, which have recently been rebuilt and re-lined with bentonite. The maximum water surface of these three stock ponds is estimated to cover approximately 0.2 acre. There is also a well and a 500-gallon storage tank.
- The RFVHC would like to see the irrigation water rights used, running water put in the ditches, and water stored in the ponds for irrigation and most especially for the wildlife. We propose a putting in a stock tank from the well, similar to the existing trough tank on the Crown. We would be happy to implement this project.
- A healthy diverse wildlife habitat needs water. Surveys in our valley repeatedly show our citizens and visitors connect with our lands through the wildlife.
- The biodiversity of the Sutey Ranch can provide an educational experience for wildlife enthusiasts, birders and children's groups.
- Keeping the Sutey Parcel irrigated annually is critical and has a multitude of benefits.
- Noxious weed production is significantly reduced with irrigation.
- Green space created by irrigation reduces the threat of wildfires and helps provide water on site.

- Water ultimately benefits the area by reducing the heat, keeping the vegetation and the land cooler, which protects the property from aridification. Flood irrigation recharges the aquifer, benefiting the surrounding lands.
- “The laws pertaining to Colorado water rights are unique in the country. The owner of the land and/or water must show that the water is being put to a beneficial use. Beneficial use is commonly categorized as household, agricultural, or industrial use, although ecological use, such as maintaining a wetlands environment for certain animal or bird species has been recognized as beneficial use in some court jurisdictions. Appropriation rights, are subject to abandonment. Division of Water Resources keeps a list of claims considered abandoned, categorized in each of the seven major river basins in the state. These abandoned claims can then be re-claimed.” – taken from **Colorado Water Rights - Protection and Conservation of Natural Resources**  
Sunday, May 3rd, 2009
- Removing vested water rights from the Sutey Ranch parcel can have serious consequences. The Sutey Ranch water rights should not be sold, nor should the water be taken off the land and put in any other creek, or drainage. The RFVHC is adamantly opposes removing the water from the land.
- The RFVHC believes that taking the water off of the Sutey Ranch would be a catastrophic decision for all the reasons listed above. At this time the wildlife is seeking shelter and forage elsewhere, because the irrigation water was not utilized in early summer.



On July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018, Horse Council members rode the Sutey Ranch Parcel. Of the three stock ponds, this was the only one with water. Desperate wildlife are on neighboring properties seeking clean drinking water. Early use of irrigation water rights would stem progress of aridification on the Sutey Ranch.

### **LIVESTOCK GRAZING**

- The Horse Council recommends that there be no livestock grazing. The property should be primarily set aside for the wildlife, horseback and hiking recreation.

### **MINERALS & OIL AND GAS**

- This land should be restricted from any mineral and oil and gas exploration and production.

### **HUMAN RECREATION CARRYING CAPACITY**

- Lack of congestion with less people creates a scenic, more peaceful, balanced recreational experience enjoying the land and the wildlife together. The finite 557 acres of the Sutey Ranch Property can only support a limited number of

recreational visitors. The BLM can prevent wildlife habitat fragmentation.

- On the 2017, BLM website, it states for Red Hill, SRMA **“use is relatively heavy topping 40,000 people per year.”** In 2018, the BLM, Colorado River Valley Field Office states - **“The Red Hill SRMA receives more than 55,000 visitors per year.”** With an increase of 15,000 trail users in one year for the 3,100 acre Red Hill SRMA for mountain bikes, what will happen to the 557 acres of our precious Sutey Ranch if bike trails connect and mountain bike riders top out of Red Hill and ride downhill into this area.
- In your management plan, please do not promote and advertise the Sutey Ranch for heavy, human recreational use, turning it into a playground.
- Prioritizing horseback riding and hiking of the Sutey Ranch Homestead will automatically reduce the number of users. We ask the BLM to consider this land’s carrying capacity.

## **WESTERN HERTIAGE**

- The Historic Sutey Ranch Homestead has many old ranch structures, corrals; a system of irrigation ditches; long established, flood irrigated, hay fields; old growth lilacs and apple trees, and numerous stands of Juniper and Pinon trees. The lichen rocks scattered around the property are unique and beautiful.



- The Irrigation system includes ditches and laterals ditches, which irrigate approximately 115 acres of the parcel. Much of this irrigated pasture is seeded for hay crop. In addition, there are three stock ponds, There is also a well and a 500-gallon storage tank that serviced the five barns/agricultural buildings.



- This exceptional homestead property takes our minds back in time, when the Sutey Brothers lived on the land. Our Western Heritage still lives at the Sutey Ranch, as the wind whispers through the slats of the old structures still standing at the original home ranch.
- In the 1980s Leonard Coleman and Kevin Wright of the DOW found American Indian Ute arrowheads on their visit to the Sutey Ranch. Native American Heritage, and the spirits of old souls who hunted on this land keep this spiritual place sacred.
- Peaceful, natural, and quiet, horseback trail riding connects humans with nature and supports the historic intention of our Western Heritage. We ask that the BLM support the historic nature of the Sutey Ranch Parcel.



We ask that the Sutey Ranch be kept with the existing use of hiking and horseback riding recreation only. We ask for special protections for the water, by using of the vested, existing water rights on the land. We ask for special protection for the wildlife by enhancing the habitat to improve the biodiversity of the Sutey Parcel. We would love to see the Goshawk, the Sage Grouse, the Milk Snake, and the Brewers Sparrow on our next horseback ride across the Sutey Ranch. If vested water rights are used on the Sutey Ranch and the ponds are filled, this area could be an appropriate habitat for Northern Leopard frog. We ask that the BLM preserve and protect our Western Heritage through the tradition of riding horses on the land.

And finally, we ask that the Sutey Ranch be the one place where we can ride horses without mountain bikes.

Please consider our requests. We would sincerely appreciate visiting with you about management decisions for this property.

\* Final page of this document is condensed Bullet Requests for the Historic Sutey Ranch in “The Heart Of Horse Country”.

\* The RFBVHC supports the positions of : Wilderness Workshop and The Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) for the Wildlife. If takes an SRMA for hikers and horseback riders only, to protect the Sutey Ranch from mountain bike recreation, then we support the proposal submitted by “The Neighbors.”

Please see Attached Letters from RFBVHC members, concerned citizens from RFBVHC members, neighbors –

**Susan Cuseo – RFBVHC Trail Chairman**

**July 12, 2018 BLM Scoping Meeting - Sutey Ranch  
Comments from Susan Cuseo, Board Member of  
Roaring Fork Valley Horse Council**

- What the Roaring Fork Valley equestrians are hoping for is the small acreage of trails preserved for horse and hikers only within historic Sutey Ranch homestead.
- The RFBVHC would like to help create a safe area for horses and hikers. The overall multi-use strategy should mean that every user group can access safe trails within the greater area but not all trails. Horsemen seek an area where user traffic is predictable and safe. This is especially pertinent to

- beginner/novice/intermediate horsemen. As bikers would probably not take beginners on an unsafe (steep, rocky, crowded, appropriate for “downhill” use only”) we would like to have the same consideration possible for horseback riders.
- From my personal experience as a representative of the two most vulnerable user groups, horseback riders and hikers with small children, I have observed generally polite and responsible bikers but also unsafe exceptions to that generalization. I experienced a biker almost running down a 3 year old child as well as bikers hostile due to having their “personal best” interrupted by a child using the same trail. More than once on that last experience, for sure. We are hoping to make a case for safety of horse and hiker user groups.
  - Hikers and horses move slowly. Horses are prey animals and wildlife do not usually perceive horses or hikers as a fast moving, predatory threat as they do speedy bikes. Hiker/horse travel is more aligned with an historic ranch’s peaceful qualities and wildlife safety we seek to preserve.
  - We believe utilizing existing Sutey trails would preserve funds for other projects. No trail-building is needed for horse and hiker use.
  - We would like to continue the historical use from neighboring horse properties that have been riding Sutey trails since establishing residence in the area.
  - We hope for some preservation of historical use. Sutey Ranch was homesteaded in accordance with the Homestead Act of 1862 and hosted cattle and horses since late 1800s. Sutey was, and we hope remains, a working historical ranch.
  - No parking for horse trailers is possible at the Red Hill Hwy 82/133 intersection, very popular for commuter, biker, hiker parking. So, despite horses being legally allowed, horseback riding is not possible from that entry point. We hope to have improved (enlarged) parking at the new Sutey parking lot on CR 112 and have one point of entry.

#### In Conclusion:

- Compared to the significant miles of bike trails in Garfield, Pitkin and Eagle counties where bikes are allowed and some recent improvements are underway (Crown), horse/hiker only trails are virtually non-existent. We are hoping for Sutey’s comparatively small acreage to be an exception to “bikes everywhere”. Quoting from my conversation with BLM Grand Jct, “multi-use does not mean every use”. Horsemen are an “unmet demand” at this point in time regarding reserved/managed trails.

- Grand Junction BLM developed management alternatives in response to community input. In this case, listening to valid and historical users, to establish horse/hiker only areas in McInnis NCA (Devils/Flume/Pollock Canyons) and certain trails in Rabbit Valley. In the case of McInnis, areas previously open to bikes were changed to horse/hiker only successfully. Bike users went elsewhere in the area where many more trails, much more acreage is available. Change has been accepted by both user groups.
- Horsemen hope to preserve some land for wildlife. My personal experience in Sutey is observing both signs and live deer and elk in addition to all the little creatures. With wildlife being driven more each day from their native habitat by human greed and carelessness (ongoing Lake Christine fire now a huge example of the latter) can we please leave some areas minimally disturbed? We humans are the immigrants here, the late arriving users. Can we be respectful to the natives?
- Bike riders, by necessity, must be very focused on a short distance in front of their wheels for their own safety. Horsemen and hikers can enjoy the greater landscape and hope to continue doing so without being threatened by users with a more limited view.
- What could horsemen do to help? We do not have user group numbers to make trails ourselves nor an industry to fund that activity. Sutey trails are perfect the way they are. What other services could we undertake? Since the Sutey area has been so beautifully restored, what could we do to maintain that level of preservation? Keeping the relatively pristine quality of the ranch intact is important to us.

In summary, we are pleading to keep the Sutey Ranch as pristine as possible for wildlife, horsemen and hikers who have used the area in quiet appreciation for 100 years.

Thank you for considering my remarks on behalf of the Roaring Fork Valley Horse Council

Very Sincerely,  
Susan Cuseo  
226 Kings Row  
Carbondale, CO 81623

**Letter from Deborah VanCott – Sutey Ranch Neighbor –**  
July 25, 2018

To The BLM regarding the Sutey Ranch Parcel,

I have lived across the road from the Sutey Ranch for 28 years. I am writing this letter to urge you to not allow any access for motorized vehicles and bicycles on the Sutey Ranch. The bicyclists have at least 3,500 acres on Red Hill, 9,100 acre on the Crown, and bike trails, too numerous to mention across the Roaring Fork Valley and beyond. The bicycle groups have a large voice on the decision making process for the trails in this valley. The hikers/walkers/runners and horseback riders have very little say for the future of our trail systems in this area. I have had problems riding my horses on the Sutey Ranch, when bikers come upon my horses and those of my friends.

Mountain bikers have been using the ranch for years, making bandit trails, even though it is illegal. The mountain bikers have a culture of entitlement, which is predicated on never asking for permission, and establishing ownership through trespass. They pressure and overwhelm the land managers to accommodate them, resulting in severe impacts on the other historic, established, long time trail users, hikers and horseback riders.

Tony and John Sutey never ever allowed bicycles on the ranch. They are quoted by neighbors as saying they carried a shotgun for the mountain bikers, should they see them. The bikers have been accessing the Sutey Ranch and BLM property through Red Hill even though they are not allowed on the ranch.

There are many new bandit trails that they have made over the years, fragmenting wildlife habitat. They even had a bike race on the Red Hill, BLM property and left plastic water containers in the woods.

It is difficult for bikers and horseback riders to co-exist on the trails in this valley. Accidents have happened where a bike comes upon a horse. When mountain bikers don't verbally announce that they are there, then horses react in flight from fear mode. Fast moving, silent, mountain bikes are perceived as a predator (mountain lion – swift and silent) by the horse. The rider is thrown off the horse, as the mountain biker comes flying around a corner surprising everyone.

The wildlife need to be protected on this ranch with continued irrigation. The drought has affected the wildlife in this area dramatically. The deer come under my deck to drink out of a water tank while I am standing right there. For this reason, Sutey Ranch must use it's irrigation water to fill the ponds and ditches. There are many animals living at the ranch that need to have a peaceful, safe habitat, which is impossible if it is open to bikes.

The increased traffic on County Road 112, Crystal Springs Road, will become even more dangerous than it is already. County Road 112, 103 and 113 are currently congested with bikers, who ride in the middle of the road and do not move out of the way of cars, runners, and walkers, often with dogs on leash.

Riders on horseback, must ride County Road 112 to access the Sutey Ranch from neighboring properties. It is dangerous to have the bikes flying past you when you are riding a horse on slick asphalt. A

thousand pound creature with steel shoes trying to flee on pavement is very scary. Equestrians need truck and trailer parking at the Sutey parking area along Crystal Springs Road for access.

In general, bikers lack trail etiquette. They have no respect for other trail users, and most especially, they seem to have no respect for our fragile wildlife habitat and our environment.

Please keep the cultural and historic aspect of the Sutey Ranch intact by not allowing motorized vehicles and bikes on the property. Keep the tradition of riding horses on the land for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Deborah VanCott  
2098 County Road 112  
Carbondale, CO 81623

### **Kathy Weiss – Neighbor of the Sutey Ranch**

To the BLM:

I am a property owner on CR 112. Some of my property is contiguous w/ the Sutey Ranch.

I have been living here since 1979. As the years that have passed, more and more native animals are feeling the pressure to come to my Ranch to eat, drink water, rest and sleep: Deer, a few elk, coyotes, wild turkeys, brown bears, and racoons are a few species that seek refuge at my Ranch.

The wildlife of Colorado, the Roaring Fork Valley and the Crystal Springs Area need a fighting chance to survive. Allow the native animals to live in peace at Sutey Ranch. I am suggesting that Sutey Ranch be closed to the public- esp. after the Catherine Lake fire and so many other fires were started due to human actions.

People do reckless and stupid things, with no thought of the consequences. People always have and always will. It is human nature. The risk of this type of incident is all too real if you allow shooting and camping at Sutey Ranch. With last year and this years' terrible drought, I recommend that Sutey Ranch stay closed to the public until we are out of the drought. That might take some time.

After the effects of the drought have subsided, Sutey Ranch should remain closed to all vehicles that have wheels: bikes, ATV's, snowmobiles, 4 wheelers, mountain bikes, baby strollers. All dogs should be leashed. No shooting allowed. At best, Sutey Ranch should allow only horseback trail riders or hikers there till the end of time.

Having personally known the Sutey Brothers, my neighbors and shareholders on the same Ditch, since 1979, I know this is what they would want too. As you are aware of, the Sutey brothers left their beloved Ranch to their heirs. The heirs, having different needs and wants, sold to the

highest bidder. The Sutey brothers would have rolled over in their grave if they knew their Ranch was bought at the suggestion of a Pitkin County employee, to be used as nothing more than a bargaining chip for the Crown Land Exchange.

Sincerely,  
Kathy Weiss  
1609 CR 112  
Carbondale, Co. 81623  
970-309-7037 cell

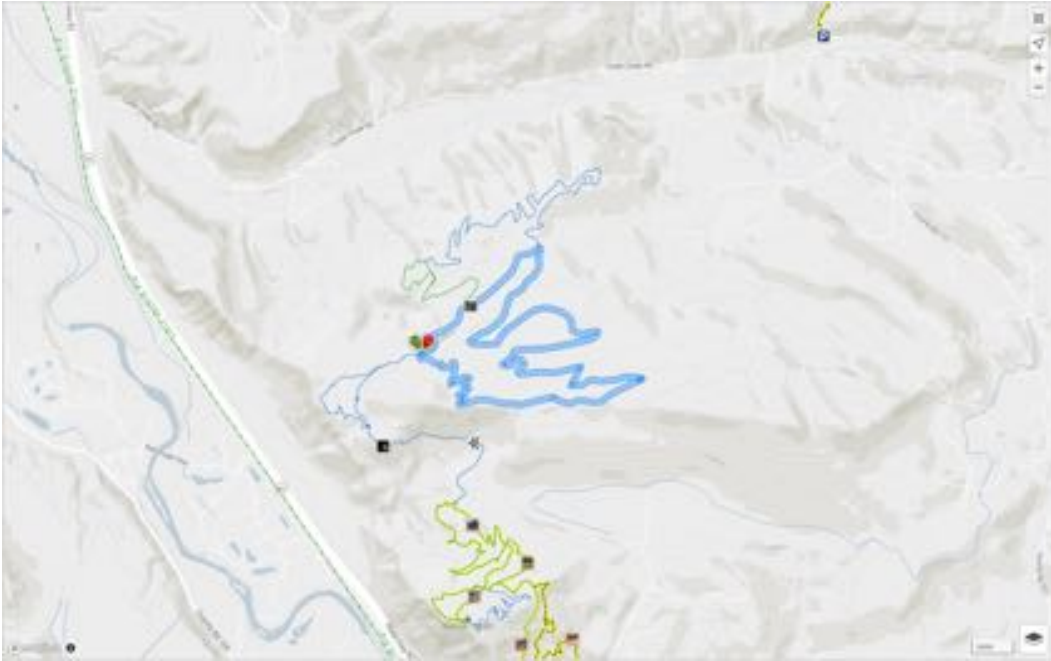


Hiking and horseback riding on the Sutey Ranch is a natural, peaceful experience without the mountain bike intrusion.

# RED HILL EXISTING TRAILS

Addendum A -

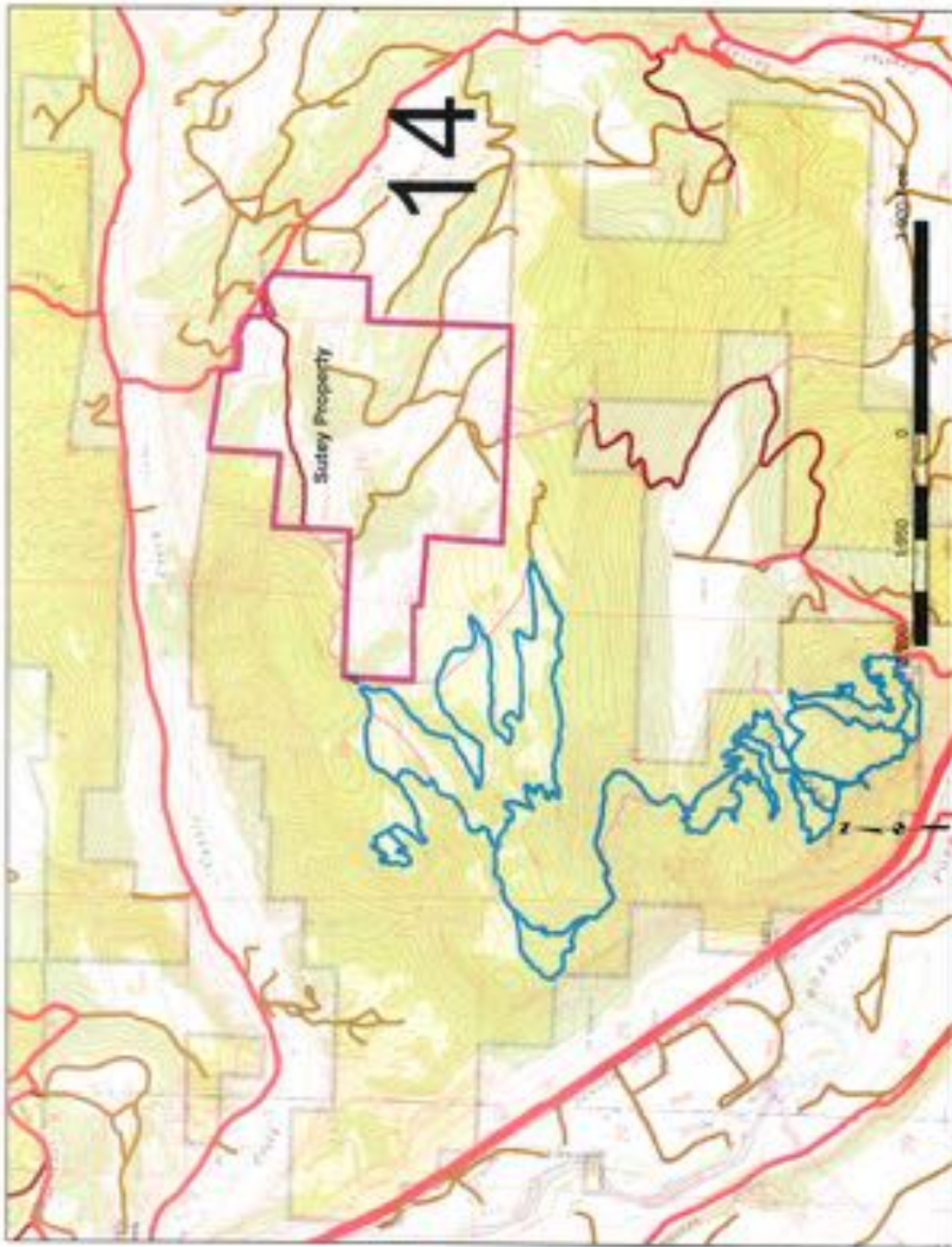
## NORTHSIDE LOOP



Addendum B – **BIGTOP**



Proposed over the top, downhill mountain bikes will impact the peaceful Sutey Ranch.



Proposed by th RFMBA, the Northside Loop mountain bike trails would connect to the Sutey Ranch at the very top of Red Hill's highest elevation. These would be decent, down hill, fast mountain bike trails. In 2018, 55,000 trail enthusiasts enjoyed Red Hill. The peaceful, predictable, trail safety experience that hikers and horseback riders depend upon would be gone.



## **RFVHC - Request Bullets for THE BLM HISTORIC SUTHEY RANCH PARCEL**

- We ask that the Sutey Ranch be kept with the **existing use of hiking and horseback riding recreation only**.
- The Horse Council wants the Sutey Ranch to stay as it is currently, with no new trails. The equestrians and hikers have enjoyed this property in its' natural state, with the wildlife and we see no reason to change the character of the land.
- **Equestrians need parking.** The location of the existing parking lot is suitable, but the size needs to be enlarged. An appropriate equestrian parking lot accommodates trucks and trailers as they pull in, swing around in the area, angle park, facing out.
- We ask for **special protections for the water**, by using of the vested, existing water rights filling ditches and ponds and spreading water on the land.
- We ask for **special protection for the wildlife** by enhancing the habitat to improve the biodiversity of the Sutey Parcel. We would love to see the Goshawk, the Sage Grouse, the Milk Snake, the Brewers Sparrow and if irrigation water can fill the ponds, the Northern Leopard frog on our next horseback ride across the Sutey Ranch.
- We ask that the BLM **preserve and protect our Western Heritage** through the tradition of riding horses on the land. The Horse Council recommends that there be no livestock grazing. This land should be restricted from any mineral and oil and gas exploration and production.
- We ask the BLM to consider this land's carrying capacity. The Sutey Ranch, 557 acres is a very small 1.8 % of the 30,000 all the terrain that BLM manages. Keep it quiet, and safe for the wildlife, hikers and horseback riders. We ask for **special protection for horseback riders**.
- The Aspen Valley Land Trust holds funds in Trust granted for management of the Sutey Ranch. We request that these funds to go towards improving the ranch irrigation and water distribution for the wildlife, including a water trough for equestrian's horses.
- According to the Colorado Horse Council, the **horse industry has a 2.6 billion dollar impact on our Colorado economy**. Colorado State Governor's mandate, "Our goal is to make Colorado the best state for biking in the country." We believe that goal has been met in this valley. Based on economics, the Horse Industry should have equal weight, **when deciding management strategies for BLM Public Lands**.

Please support our local horse industry livelihoods and our way of life.

- **And finally, we ask that the Sutey Ranch be the one place where we can ride horses without mountain bikes.**
- 

## **THE BLM HAINES PARCEL – PRINCE CREEK ROAD – GARFIELD COUNTY**

- The Roaring Fork Valley Horse Council (RFVHC) is asking the BLM to please support finding a parking spot for equestrians access to the Penstemon Trail, and Crown Road #8320 as they have historically done for over a century.
- Horsemen need the historic truck and trailer parking on the Haines Meadow for easy access to the CROWN, Middle Country riding terrain. Our parking will not interfere with bike trails. On March 12, 2018, Pitkin County BOCC and OST wrote a letter to the BLM requesting BLM to allocate equestrian parking in Middle Country Crown area.
- The new recreational designation for mountain bikers on the Crown should not abolish the historic horseback riding precedent from the Middle Country on the Crown. The Haines Parcel provides immediate, easy access to the Crown Middle Country.
- Historic horseback riding needs special protection on the Haines Parcel. The RFVHC asks that the SMRA for mountain bikes be kept out of the Haines Parcel. We are concerned that the management of the SRMA is excluding horseback riding by not allowing parking to access the Middle Country.

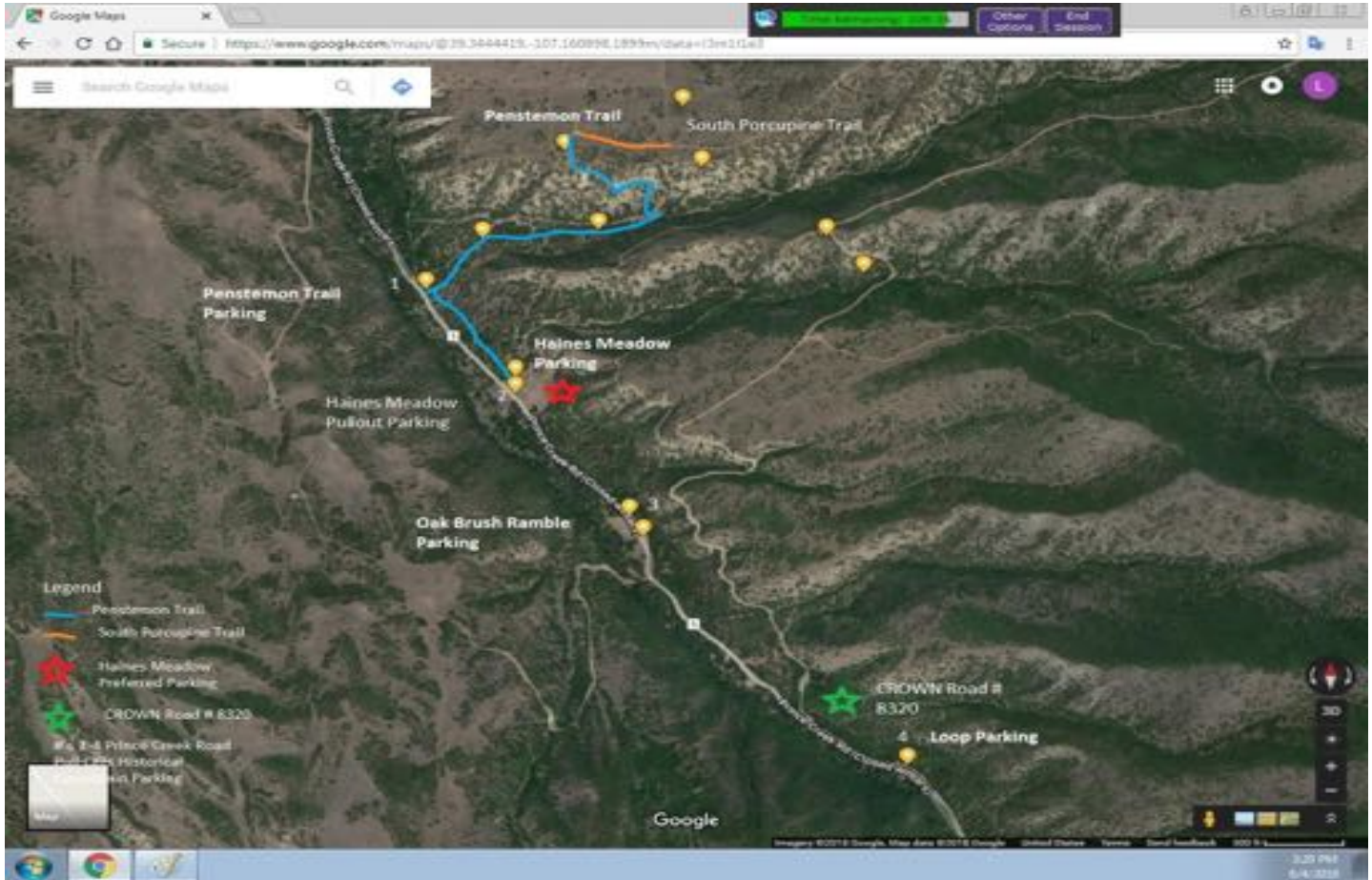
## TRAILS



- Introducing the mountain bike SRMA on the Crown has changed the character and atmosphere on the land. We don't want the Haines Parcel to have any additional mountain bike trails. This area is congested enough. Mountain bikers have an abundance of trails to ride in the mid valley area, including the SRMAs the 9,100 acres Crown and the 3,500 acre Red Hill.
- The Penstemon Trail marked on the attached map connects the Haines Meadow going South to the South Porcupine Trail, a multi-use trail.
- The Penstemon Trail is an existing trail that mountain bikers are not using and which is not on the Mountain Bike Trail Map that Mike Pritchard (RFMBA) provided to Horse Council Board Members.

Addendum A –

- attached is a map showing the Middle Country of the Crown with the Penstemon Trail and Prince Creek Road with the red star showing desired equestrian parking in the Haines Meadow, on the recently obtained Haines Parcel.



## PARKING



**Haines Meadow - Ready to ride.**

- The Haines Meadow, a Historic Equestrian Parking location, creates the least impact ecologically, is already fenced and therefore can easily be managed and controlled, and has excellent line of site from Prince Creek Road for safe and single egress and ingress. This location requires no work for immediate use. The RFVHC is willing to create a parking loop within the meadow, thereby keeping the majority of the meadow intact. The parking loop will avoid the existing mountain bike trails.
- 100 feet is the minimum space needed to swing around modern horse trucks and trailers. Most trucks and trailers rigs are 40-60 feet in length. Shared parking works best, when vehicles have designated parking areas separate from the horse trailers. People unfamiliar with horses may not understand that horses need space the trailer for tying, saddling and loading.
- We understand that the BLM intends to build campgrounds in two designated campsites, to alleviate illegal camping. We support the BLM's efforts to manage this problem. However,

the two designated camp site locations have been the traditional equestrian parking areas for many years. The BLM, in solving one problem has created another problem for the horseback rider user group. In doing this the equestrians are forced to use Prince Creek Road for parking.

## **WILDLIFE & WATER**

- The RFVHC asks the BLM to place special protection on the wildlife and the water on the Haines Parcel. We recommend strict winter wildlife closures for all human activity. Starting Dec 1<sup>st</sup> through April 15<sup>th</sup>. For safety, dogs need be kept under control by their owners.
- A healthy diverse wildlife habitat needs water. Surveys in our valley repeatedly show our citizens and visitors connect with our lands through the wildlife. The livestock trough, which Tom Turnbull put in many years ago is used by the wildlife and by horseback riders for their horses. The livestock ponds on the crown are also used by the grazing cattle and the wildlife. Those ponds are imperative for the wildlife.

## **LIVESTOCK GRAZING**

- Since the CROWN is a well-established grazing area, we support the ranchers who use their permits.

## **MINERALS & OIL & GAS**

- This land should be restricted from any mineral and oil and gas exploration and production.

## **HUMAN RECREATION CARRYING CAPACITY**

We ask the BLM to consider this land's carrying capacity, which will prevent more wildlife habitat fragmentation.

## **WESTERN HERTIAGE**

- Horseback trail riding connects humans with nature and supports the historic intention of our Western Heritage. We ask that the BLM support the historic nature of the Haines Parcel. The Homestead Act of 1862 ushered in the era of cattle ranching in the Roaring Fork Valley. When you drive up Prince

Creek Road, over the cattleguard you feel the traditions still alive. You are entering the old West. The dusty road, the meandering creek next to the old corrals and catch pens, and the roaming cattle take you back in time. Many locals and visitors alike drive along Prince Creek Road to experience the essence of our Western Heritage. We ask the BLM to hold onto and keep this Western experience alive. The Haines Parcel is the front door to the Middle Country of the CROWN.

The equestrian community needs parking. We ask the BLM for parking in the Haines Meadow to access the Penstemon Trail and the Crown Road #8320 in the Middle Country of the Crown. Please include keeping the Haines Parcel out of the SRMA for Mountain Bikes. We want the Haines Parcel to have a balanced recreational management plan including special protections the wildlife and our Western Heritage.

Thank you so much for your consideration on this matter.

Kindest Regards,

The Board of Directors the RFVHC

Karin Reid Offield – President  
Rheta Strong – Vice President  
Pamela True – Secretary  
Alexandra Anwyl Advies - Treasurer  
Holly McLain – Communication  
Leslie Thomas – Project Coordinator  
Susan Cuseo – Trails  
Marty Schlumberger  
Bob Pietrzak -Advisor

\* Final page of this document is condensed Bullet Requests for the BLM Haines Parcel – Prince Creek Road – Garfield County

**RFVHC - Request Bullets for  
THE BLM HAINES PARCEL – PRINCE CREEK ROAD –  
GARFIELD COUNTY**

- The Haines Parcel is the front door to the Middle Country of the CROWN. **Please let horsemen and horsewomen have entrance to these lands through truck and trailer parking to continue the tradition of riding on our historic trails.**
- The equestrian community needs parking. **We ask the BLM for parking in the Haines Meadow** to access the Penstemon Trail and the Crown Road #8320 in the Middle Country of the Crown.
- Our horseback riding trails take us away from Prince Creek Road, and away from the mountain bike trails. **Equestrians need short, quick and easy access from Hwy 82, to Hwy 133, to ride the Middle and Upper Crown.** The Haines Meadow requires no work for immediate use. The parking loop in this meadow will avoid the existing mountain bike trails.
- **We support strict winter wildlife closures as recommended by the CPW for December 1<sup>st</sup> through April 15<sup>th</sup>.**
- **We ask the BLM to keep the Haines Parcel out of the SRMA for Mountain Bikes.** We want the Haines Parcel to have a balanced recreational management plan including special protections for the wildlife and our Western Heritage.
- Protect our Western **Heritage**. The Homestead Act of 1862 ushered in the era of cattle ranching in the Roaring Fork Valley. When you drive up Prince Creek Road, over the cattleguard you feel those traditions are still alive. You envision entering the old West. The dusty road, the meandering creek next to the old corrals and catch pens, and the sight of roaming cattle take you back in time. Many locals and visitors alike drive along Prince Creek Road to experience the essence of our Western Heritage. We ask the BLM to hold onto and keep this Western experience alive. **We ask for special protections for horseback riding on our historic mountain trails.**