

HISTORY OF THE CROWN

WILDLIFE

The Crown is a 9,100 acre foot hill of Mount Sopris. This beautiful area has always been the largest contiguous, winter, wildlife habitat area in the Roaring Fork Valley. Elk and deer pass in early spring from this protected, closed, winter sanctuary across Prince Creek Road to calving grounds in the low alpine, aspen groves around Mt. Sopris.

RANCHING

The Homestead Act of 1862 opened up settlement in the **western** United States, allowing any American, including freed slaves, to put in a claim for up to 160 free acres of federal land. During this time many homestead families settled in and around Carbondale, Colorado. Ranchers made many of the trails on the Crown as they drove their cattle up into the higher alpine country for summer grazing. In the 1960s, the Crown Road 8320 was constructed for cattle rancher access and water tank installation. The livestock water tanks still serve the BLM permitted livestock on the Crown. Early ranching families, such as Turnbull, Cerise and Nieslanik still run their cattle every summer on the Crown.

HUNTING

The BLM continues to improve the Crown Road 8320 and the many connecting two track trails for recreational use on the Crown. Hikers, equestrians, hunters, cross country skiers, snowshoe enthusiasts and mountain bikers enjoy vast landscapes encompassing the Crown.

MOUNTAIN BIKES

Many mountain bikers had used the Crown for recreation enjoyment riding ditch trails, wildlife paths and in some cases making their own trails on the Crown. In 2015, the Crown was designated as a SRMA (Special Recreation Management Area) for mountain bikes.

THE CROWN JEWEL HORSE TRAIL

Horseback riders continue our Western Heritage traditions by keeping horses on trails. This "Crown Jewel Horse Trail", which is being improved today is designated specifically for hikers and horseback riders. We are thankful to the BLM, RFOV, RMYC and partners for including these recreational users in their overall plan on the Crown. Great thanks to all of you, who are volunteering your time and effort today.

