



Trails and
Open Space
Coalition

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August 20th, 2014

Mr. Merv Bennett
Chair, Colorado Springs Utilities Board
Colorado Springs Utilities
PO Box 1103
Colorado Springs, CO 80947-0010
Via email: mbennett@springsgov.com

Re: Jones Park property

Dear Mr. Chairman and Utility Board,

We are contacting you to express our support for the transfer of the 1172 acre CSU Jones Park property to the National Forest Foundation to facilitate ultimate transfer to the US Forest Service. Transfer should also facilitate improvements to the Bear Creek trail system, thus allowing users to recreate in this beautiful environment and access the cultural resources while decreasing the sedimentation risks to the threatened Greenback Cutthroat trout.

We understand that the property no longer has any operational value to CSU and constitutes a management and thus ratepayer burden. In as much as the property is completely surrounded by USFS lands, transfer would unify the Bear Creek watershed under USFS ownership and provide for unified trail management and protection for the trout.

The Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC) is dedicated to the preservation of open space and parks and the creation of a network of trails, bikeways and greenways for the Pikes Peak region. We are a privately funded non-profit organization with 1,200 members and thousands of supporters. We strongly support the creation and preservation of hiking, bicycling and equestrian trails and the preservation of open space. We advocate for the natural values of the resource and for recreational opportunities for hikers, runners, cyclists and equestrians.

TOSC is very concerned about the possible loss of recreation opportunities and access to our cultural history and protection of the trout if the property is sold or donated to other parties. We urge you to proceed with the transfer process to the USFS as presented at the June 10th Bear Creek Roundtable meeting by Mark Shea, CSU.

Sincerely,

Bill Koerner
Advocacy Director

Susan Davies
Executive Director

C: USFS District Ranger; Pike, San Isabel National Forest