

LOCAL & REGION

A land purchase worthy of a great celebration

Let's give a big round of applause to Eagle County's Open Space Department! Their recent announcement of the pending purchase of 288 acres of the Horn Ranch for permanent conservation and public river access is worthy of celebration! This open space project marks a momentous milestone for our entire mountain community.

The Horn Ranch is one of the most visible and stunning landscapes along the Interstate 70 and Eagle River corridor here in Eagle County. This iconic piece of land is in the heart of Red Canyon, the beautiful landscape of crimson hillsides as you travel between Wolcott and Eagle. It also features over a mile of Eagle River frontage, and serves as a wonderful natural visual buffer between populous and developed areas to the east and west. The Horn Ranch is one of those "classic Colorado" landscapes and a very special open space within our community.

FOREVER PROTECTED VIEWS

This important land purchase is being spearheaded by Toby Sprunk, Eagle County open space director, and funded by county open space dollars, along with a generous grant from Great Outdoors Colorado (the lottery dollars.) Once acquired, the property will be protected by a conservation easement donated by Eagle County to the Eagle Valley Land Trust. To make it even better,

Sprunk also negotiated a conservation agreement with the landowner for an additional 114 acres of the ranch. With both conservation projects, 402 acres of the Horn Ranch may soon be permanently placed into conservation with our nonprofit Land Trust. This will forever protect the iconic vistas and stunning views of the gorgeous Red Canyon valley enjoyed by thousands of travelers along I-70 every day.



Jason Denhart
Trust Our Land

PERMANENT HABITATS

In addition to saving the landscapes of Red Canyon, the conservation project will protect wildlife habitat in and around the Eagle River, while

providing 288 acres of permanent public open space. About 5,900 feet of the Eagle River will also be opened to the public for fishing and floating.

BUSTLING RAILROAD STOP

The conservation of the Horn Ranch will also preserve some important Eagle County history. A semi-famous prospector from Fairplay, Rupert Sherwood, laid claim to the land in 1883 and started a cattle operation. From 1895 to 1915, the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad had a key stop on the rail line on this land. Its bridge was the major crossing point on the Eagle River between Wolcott and Eagle, and it boasted a lumber mill and a saloon. The area was also an important stone quarry. Its brownstone was used in the construction of the historic

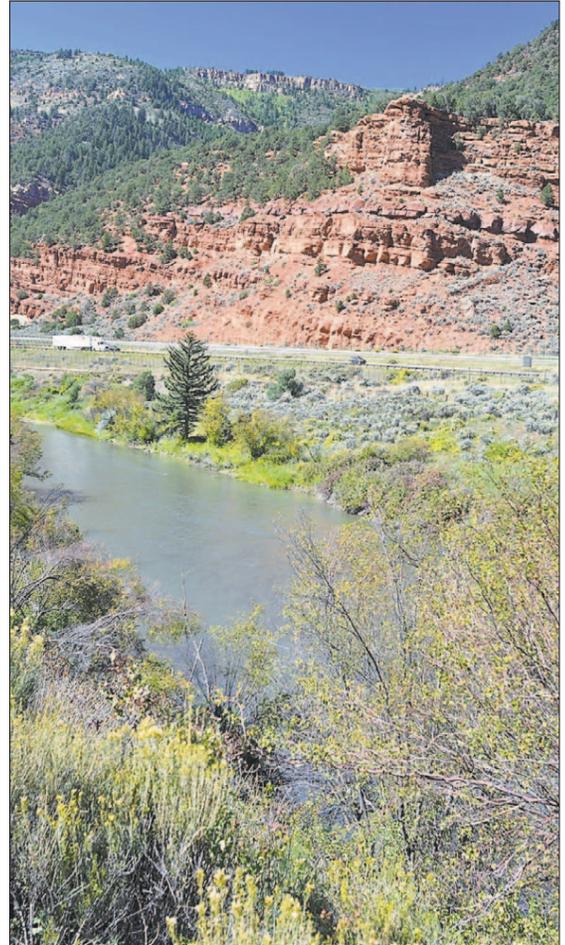
Hotel Jerome in Aspen, the Brown Palace Hotel in Denver and the 1890 Opera House in Pueblo.

The Eagle Valley Land Trust commends our local leaders — Eagle County's Board of Commissioners and Open Space Department Director Toby Sprunk — for their land conservation vision. We are proud to be their partners in local land conservation projects, and the Land Trust looks forward to conserving this valuable open space property for our community forever.

HOORAY FOR HORN RANCH

Protecting iconic local landscapes as we drive along I-70 is important for our quality of life and for our tourism-based economy. These views that we all know and love are part of what keeps us locals here and our visitors coming back. We should all cheer for the permanent conservation of the Horn Ranch, one of the most visually stunning places along the Eagle River and I-70 corridor. Keep an eye out for an announcement when these conservation projects are completed later this year. Hooray for Horn Ranch!

Jason Denhart is the director of communications and development for the Eagle Valley Land Trust. The land trust is dedicated to saving land for the people of Eagle County and preserving the character of our community, one acre at a time. For more information, visit www.evl.org or email jdenhart@evlt.org.



SPECIAL TO THE DAILY

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