



Parks & Open Space

5201 St. Vrain Road • Longmont, CO 80503
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www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org

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TO: Board of County Commissioners
FROM: Janis Whisman, Real Estate Division Manager
FOR: BOCC Business Meeting, 9:30 a.m., Tuesday, August 19, 2025
RE: Tolland Ranch Funding Support Letter
MEMO DATE: August 21, 2025

Land Commitment: For much longer than Parks & Open Space's history of stewarding open space, the land in this community has been important to American Indian, urban native, Indigenous, and other cultural communities that continue to live here. We are making meaningful changes to how we do our work that include them, incorporate their perspectives, and honor their land stewardship legacy. Parks & Open Space operates within modern legal constructs of land ownership to steward Boulder County open space and accomplish these efforts on behalf of our community.

Summary of Request

The Conservation Fund (TCF) is assisting Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW) with its acquisition of the 3,334-acre Tolland Ranch, which is situated in Boulder and Gilpin Counties south of Eldora and west of Rollinsville. TCF is requesting a letter from Boulder County to the Colorado General Assembly supporting CPW's acquisition funding request. Staff recommends approval and signature.

Background Information

Boulder County holds a backup position for a conservation easement protecting the ranch. The conservation easement was acquired in 2015 in partnership among TCF, the Colorado State Forest Service (which administered Forest Legacy funding), Great Outdoors Colorado, and Boulder County, with support from Gilpin County. Boulder County also holds a trail easement across the property, and the resulting Kinglet trail is open to the public.

CPW has reached an agreement to buy Tolland Ranch from the Toll family, with the closing set for later this year if state funding is approved for the acquisition.

Staff Recommendation

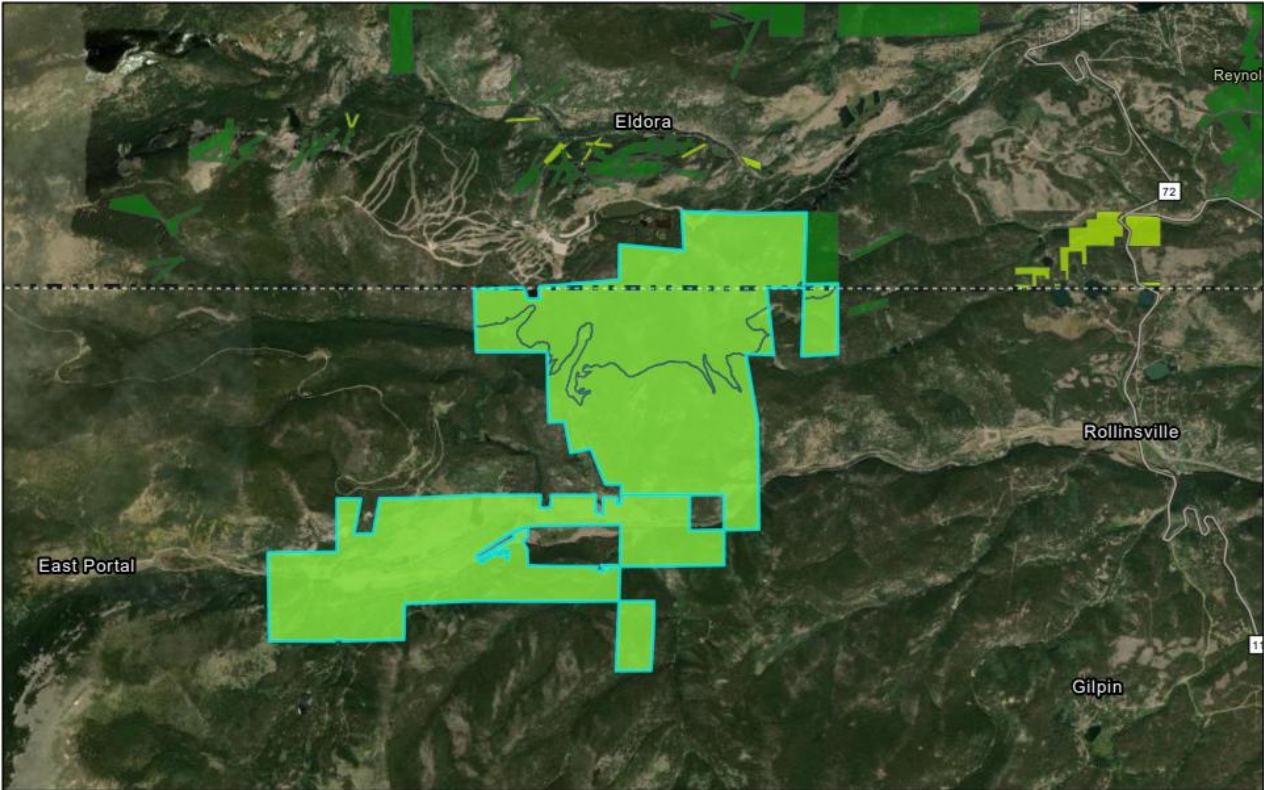
Staff recommends approval. Although CPW is still developing its plans for use of the ranch, CPW is well-equipped to own and manage the property.

BOCC Action Requested

Approve the request as described above, and as verbally presented by staff if applicable.

Property Map:

Tolland Ranch



8/15/2025, 12:44:12 PM

Boulder County Boundary
BOCO Open Space

County Open Space

County Conservation Easement

Miscellaneous Easement

World Imagery

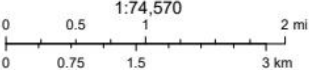
Low Resolution 15m Imagery

High Resolution 60cm Imagery

High Resolution 30cm Imagery

Citations

19m Resolution Metadata



Earthstar Geographics, Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

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August 19, 2025

Colorado General Assembly
ATTN: Capital Development Committee
200 E Colfax Ave
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Committee Members:

Boulder County wishes to express support for Colorado Parks & Wildlife's (CPW) Property Transaction Proposal to acquire the Tolland Ranch in fee title. The Conservation Fund (TCF), CPW, Boulder County, and Gilpin County have been collaborating on the acquisition of this exceptional property. The proposed acquisition of Tolland Ranch aligns with our goals to preserve natural resources for the benefit of the environment and the public and provide quality recreational experiences while protecting open space resources.

Within 20 miles of Boulder, the national forest surrounding the Tolland Ranch, and the property itself, provide popular summer and winter destinations for Boulder County's outdoor enthusiasts, including James Peak Wilderness, Indian Peaks Wilderness, Eldora Ski Area, and Boulder County's Kinglet Trail. Recognizing this area's natural resource and recreational values, Boulder County has invested substantial open space funds to protect and consolidate property around Eldora, the Indian Peaks Wilderness, and along the Peak to Peak National Scenic Byway. In 2015 Boulder County contributed significantly to the acquisition of a conservation easement on the 3,334-acre Tolland Ranch in partnership with TCF, the Colorado State Forest Service, and Great Outdoors Colorado. Through this investment, BCPOS gained an easement for the Kinglet Trail, a multi-use out-and-back trail that opened to the public in 2023.

Positioned near the top of the South Boulder Creek watershed, the 3,334-acre Tolland Ranch is one of the largest intact properties east of Colorado's Continental Divide. With 3.5 miles of South Boulder Creek and 65 miles of Nordic ski trails, the property plays an essential role in supporting wildlife habitat and migration corridors, wetlands and riparian communities, access to outdoor recreation, and forest health and wildfire mitigation across a large landscape. Ownership of the property by CPW would build on earlier conservation investments to achieve even greater control and protection of the Tolland Ranch, reducing the potential for division and development of residential building areas currently allowed by the easement. CPW's ownership would promote landscape-scale management and allow for enhancement of the native fishery, while maintaining compatibility with recreational uses and the existing conservation easement.

Boulder County recognizes the potential merits of this project. Thank you for your consideration of CPW's Proposal to acquire Tolland Ranch.

Sincerely,

Boulder County Board of County Commissioners