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NEWS

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Easement Allows Watershed Protection for 4,700 Acres West of Boulder

BOULDER, Colo. – A \$5 million grant awarded through the 2013 Forest Legacy Program, which authorizes the Colorado State Forest Service and USDA Forest Service to purchase permanent conservation easements on private forestlands, will protect more than 4,700 acres of the South Boulder Creek Watershed.

The easement will permanently protect the largest private property in the South Boulder Creek Watershed – an area that directly benefits Denver Water, which relies on the creek to help deliver safe drinking water to 1.3 million people. A conservation easement funded by the Forest Legacy Program, which prevents private forestlands from being converted to non-forest uses, will protect the 4,728-acre forested property, which is surrounded by some of Colorado's most popular national forest destinations – including James Peak Wilderness and Eldora Ski Area.

“We look forward to protecting these important forested lands in Boulder County, which benefit those in the Denver area through a clean and reliable water supply and also continue to provide many other benefits, including recreation,” said Joe Duda, CSFS deputy state forester.

The CSFS evaluates all Forest Legacy Program proposals in Colorado and recommends those that have sufficient merit to forward to the U.S. Forest Service. Of the 16 projects nationally that the USFS awarded a total of \$44.2 million in program grants this year, this project was ranked number-one in priority.

The purpose of the Forest Legacy Program is to protect environmentally important private forest areas that are threatened by conversion to non-forest uses. It provides an opportunity for private landowners to retain ownership and management of their land, while receiving compensation for unrealized development rights.

“Since 1990, the Forest Legacy Program has prevented the loss of more than 2.3 million acres of private forest lands for future generations of Americans,” said USFS Chief Tom Tidwell in a news release. “In an era of continued sprawl, this program protects land and keeps working forests working.”

For more information about the FLP in Colorado and other CSFS-administered grant programs, visit the “Funding Opportunities” link at <http://csfs.colostate.edu>.

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